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THE INTEGRATION OF AMERICAN SOCIETY

A Study of Groups and Institutions

BY

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FIRST EDITION

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What is real to me is the perception and expression of lasting truth about human life.

To the Memory
of the Author of These Lines
CHARLES HORTON COOLEY
Whose Works Bear Witness That
He Found the Reality He Sought

PREFACE

Like every human undertaking this book has a history. My first contacts with the thought of Professor Charles H. Cooley twenty years ago awakened me to the vision of American society which he expressed in *Life and the Student:* "Our democracy might be a work of art, a joyous whole, rich in form and color, free but chastened, tumultuously harmonious, unfolding strange beauty year by year." It was less than a decade ago, however, that I began to think systematically about the structure of American society. In the process of developing a course in Social Institutions, which the late Professor Roderick D. McKenzie had suggested that I give, it became necessary to consider the whole of which the various American institutions were parts. But I did not obtain a conception of societal integration satisfactory to me until I read Talcott Parsons' *The Structure of Social Action* in 1937. This work has exercised a profound influence upon my thought and I am happy to acknowledge my indebtedness to it. Whether or not common ends and values are found empirically to possess the importance that Parsons' theory assigns them, his theory gives us a promising hypothesis with which to work. I have tried to develop the implications of such a hypothesis for contemporary American life. The results are here put forward as a tentative formulation; a formulation, incidentally, for which Professor Parsons should be held in no way responsible.

The manuscript was completed before the fall of France and the adoption of the great American defense program. The morale which has been stimulated by the crisis may appear to disprove the conclusion reached herein that our society is not well integrated. My own feeling is that the

picture presented in these pages is still essentially sound and that the recently developed national morale will prove evanescent after the crisis has passed, unless fundamental changes in our societal structure occur in the meantime.

Colleagues and friends have been kind enough to criticize parts of the manuscript. I wish to express my thanks to Professor Robert M. MacIver of Columbia University, Professor Richard C. Fuller and Dr. Amos Hawley of the University of Michigan, and Dr. Ralph Danhof of the United States Department of Agriculture. Nonė of these men saw the manuscript in its final form, and they are therefore not to be charged with any of its deficiencies.

ROBERT C. ANGELL.

ANN ARBOR, MICH.,
February, 1941.

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THE INTEGRATION OF AMERICAN SOCIETY

CHAPTER I

ORIENTATION

This study starts from a fear, a trend, and a question. The fear is the one quite generally expressed that, along with the rest of Western civilization, our American society is gradually disintegrating. The trend consists in the acknowledged decline of the neighborhood and the local community in their power to influence personality and the correlative rise in such influence of more highly organized groups. The question is whether the trend offers good grounds for the fear, whether the change in the character of our social organization is in fact disintegrative from the point of view of the whole society.

The prophets of doom are all about us. Spengler and Wells, for example, paint sorry pictures of the gradual disintegration of Western civilization as the international disorders of our time become more violent and more prolonged. According to the former, there will be wars "for the heritage of the whole world, continents will be staked, India, China, South Africa, Russia, Islam called out, new technics and tactics played and counterplayed. The great cosmopolitan foci of power will dispose at their pleasure of smaller states—their territory, their economy and their men alike. . . ."[1] And though the latter may not be wholly in earnest in *The Shape of Things to Come*, the

[1] *The Decline of the West* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1932), I, p. 429.

"history of the future" which he gives us is so vivid and plausible as to make one shiver at the military destruction that will make the whole world a shambles.

Many Americans are not impressed by these dire predictions because they believe that even if the Old World does consume itself in fruitless wars we can keep aloof and save civilization for the future. In their view our splendid isolation will enable us to escape cultural eclipse. It is of course doubtful whether any nation can live unto itself in a world closely tied together by communication and trade. But, even if it can, there are still those unkind enough to point out that our own society is far from healthy. A contemporary anthropologist, drawing upon his knowledge of all sorts of societies, shows that there is a dangerous lack of a well-integrated core of culture in ours, likens the situation to that of the later Roman Empire, and indicates that we may well have to pass through another "dark age" before we can reintegrate our society successfully.[1] To much the same effect are the words of an American literary critic.

> The older religious control has been giving way for several centuries, and the danger is now manifest that in the absence of any new integrating elements what may triumph in our modern world, as it finally triumphed in the ancient world, is the principle of naked force.[2]

The decline of the old-fashioned neighborhood is so well known as to need no documentation here. It is testified to by everyday experience, the insight of novelists, and the researches of sociologists. Except in the smallest communities the individual no longer shapes his conduct primarily according to the demands of local opinion and sentiment. In our larger towns and cities he is usually quite indifferent to his neighbors' activities and to their views of him. Accompanying this change has come a great

[1] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1936), pp. 284–287.

[2] Irving Babbitt, *Democracy and Leadership* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, Inc., 1924) p. 29.

multiplication of organized groups. In addition to such ancient forms as the family, the church, and the state, there have appeared such new forms as the large capitalist enterprise, the labor union, the professional association, the club, the public school, and the organized charity. The broadening scope of social organization, together with the increasing ease of individual movement, has made necessary and possible the development of social groups to satisfy every specialized need. To some extent these groups have taken over functions once performed by the local community, but in greater measure they are responding to fresh demands arising from social differentiation.

The decay of the local community contemporaneously with the multiplication of groups has given the latter a free-standing character which few groups had in the old-fashioned village or town. Some are quietly going their own way, but others are violently clashing with one another, and many show the internal strains that reflect the absence of external discipline from a fostering local community. Because relationships are shifting and unstable, the tendency is for all groups to be self-conscious and rational in policy formation. Habit and custom are no longer sufficient modes of adaptation; intelligent aggressiveness is the only sure means of survival.

So significant has become the role of free-standing groups in contemporary life that one is tempted to say that our society is characterized by group individualism. "Each group for itself and the devil take the hindmost" might seem to be the principle under which we are operating. But to adopt such a position would be to prejudge the results of our inquiry. We cannot assume that the rise of specialized groups is disintegrative. So great an authority as Franklin Giddings seems to have assumed the opposite when he said:

> The constitution of a society is the organization of its individual members into specialized associations for achieving various social ends. For example, a town has a municipal government, churches, schools,

industrial corporations, labour organizations, literary and scientific societies, and social clubs. These associations, harmoniously correlated, are the social constitution of the community.[1]

But whether these groups are in fact harmoniously correlated in our modern communities is exactly the question. The only scientific course is to study the facts and draw our own conclusions.

It is perhaps unnecessary to emphasize that this inquiry is not concerned with promoting societal[2] integration. The initial task is always to learn just how matters stand. Only after this is finished can one formulate remedies for ills discovered. Those who are worried about the disorganized state of American life may be able to draw inferences for action from the findings of this study, but they will be disappointed if they expect to be given detailed programs.

Misunderstanding may also arise over our conception of the relation of societal integration to the good life. There is no intention of suggesting that the latter is solely dependent upon the former. In the final analysis it is individual human beings who feel needs and who strive to realize ends and values. Societal integration is important only as it conduces to the full satisfaction of those needs and makes possible the attainment of those ends and values. But that lends it no small measure of significance. Man is by nature dependent upon his fellows for both sustenance and mental development. He is a social animal indeed. And the larger the area of peace and order the greater are the chances for a full-rounded individual life. Though it is true that

[1] *Principles of Sociology* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1896), p. 171.

[2] The adjectives "social" and "societal" are to be distinguished from each other throughout this study. The former has to do with any interpersonal relationship. Thus a meeting of a few friends is a social gathering. "Societal" is used as the adjectival expression of the broad notion of society which is here particularized in the concept of an American society. In our usage, then, "social" is an inclusive term which blankets the whole field of human interaction, and "societal" is reserved for a particular kind of relationship, that involving the society as a whole.

the "cake of custom" must not be so rigid as to prevent self-expressive nonconformity and that peoples have advanced only as there have been opportunities for the free play of the creative mind, yet the social order must be stable and cohesive enough to give the personality firm roots. Nothing is clearer than that the high rates of delinquency and crime in American society are mainly due to the disorganized life in our great cities. Societal integration is not the sufficient condition of the good life, but it is a necessary one. In its absence few significant individualities are produced.

That societal integration is *one* condition of the good life is clearly suggested by Professor Wirth.

> A society is possible in the last analysis because the individuals in it carry around in their heads some sort of a picture of that society. Our society, however, in this period of minute division of labor, of extreme heterogeneity and profound conflict of interests, has come to a pass where these pictures are blurred and incongruous. Hence we no longer perceive the same things as real, and coincident with our vanishing sense of a common reality we are losing our common medium of expressing and communicating our experiences. The world has been splintered into countless fragments of atomized individuals and groups. The disruption of the wholeness of individual experience corresponds to the disintegration of culture and group solidarity. When the bases of a unified collective action begin to weaken, the social structure tends to break and to produce a condition which Emile Durkheim has termed *anomie*, by which he means a situation which might be described as a sort of social emptiness or void. Under such conditions suicide, crime, and disorder are phenomena to be expected because individual existence is no longer rooted in a stable and integrated social milieu and much of life's activity loses its sense and meaning.[1]

Many will claim, however, that the gravest problem of our society lies in the economic sphere—the failure of purchasing power among the masses to match either the productive capacity of our plants or the felt needs of millions of our population. But societal integration is not unrelated to this problem. Our society will be in constant danger of

[1] Louis Wirth in the preface to Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1936), p. xxv.

disintegration so long as it is unsolved, for we are being driven into hostile camps by our class viewpoints on it. And, conversely, we shall never solve it peaceably if our integration forsakes us first. The adjustments that will have to be made will be so difficult and so wrenching to traditional ideas that only a firm bond of common loyalty will enable us to avoid violence. Thus societal integration and the peaceful solution of the problem of distribution are twin phenomena, neither of which is possible without the other.

It would be unfortunate to give the impression that there is no need for integration on a scale larger than that of our own society. That society is only a differentiated offshoot of the larger whole called Western civilization, and we should never feel satisfied with an integration that brought us into conflict with the parent body. A reintegration of the whole Western world is perhaps not essential to our national integration, but no national integration will endure which is incompatible with the creation and maintenance of a unified Western civilization. It is the assumption of this study that progress will be made toward such a civilization only on the basis of well-disciplined constituent societies, not, as Mr. Wells seems to think, through the complete demoralization of those societies.[1] It would seem that, if each society is integrated in terms of broadly human rather than narrowly selfish purposes, it can become an instrument through which world organization is furthered.

Finally, it is important to realize that this study will not deal with all trends in our society which are significant for the problem of integration, but will investigate only the influence of the increasing differentiation of groups. It is conceivable that any disintegrative effects we may discover are being offset by new forces, not operating through organized groups, such as the radio. This seems unlikely, because we know that the human personality is most

[1] *The Shape of Things to Come* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936), Book II.

deeply affected by close, intimate association, but it would be unscientific to rule out this possibility until it is investigated. That, however, would constitute another study. We must content ourselves here with analyzing a part, though a very important part, of the total question of societal integration.

CHAPTER II

THE INTEGRATION OF A SOCIETY

Before we can discuss the problem of integration we must secure a precise notion of what *a* society is. The clue to the meaning of this term is to be found in the significance of *society* in its most abstract sense. The latter refers to the interaction of people, which is made possible by reciprocal understanding or insight. It is a kind or quality of relationship among persons—the distinctively human kind or quality. Society is not constituted merely of biological individuals but of personalities who can communicate with one another. *A* society is a set of people who interact understandingly with one another more readily and more frequently than with outsiders. Thus, in a sense, a family forms a small society. So did each of the original thirteen colonies. So does any plurality of persons who possess a means of communication peculiar to themselves or who are so situated as to be thrown in constant contact with one another. Thus a foreign-language colony in a large city is a society; but a party shipwrecked upon an uninhabited island is also a society if its members can make themselves mutually intelligible at all. Obviously there may be smaller and more perfect societies within larger and less perfect ones. Any particular society is always a concrete thing which rather inadequately embodies the notion of society in general.

The basis of understanding that makes society possible is a common world of experience. The persons concerned have similar ideas with respect to the nature and functions of objects and similar expectations with reference to the behavior of persons because they have been affected by a

common milieu. Hence their symbols have come to have common meanings.

An eminent American sociologist has given us the following vivid description of what a society is.

> There is in naval parlance an expression, "the fleet in being," which means, apparently, that the ships which constitute a fleet are in communication and sufficiently mobilized, perhaps, to be capable of some sort of concerted action. . . . A society is "in being" when the individuals that compose it are to such an extent *en rapport* that, whether capable of united and collective action or not, they may be described as participating in a common or collective existence. In such a society a diffuse social excitement tends to envelope, like an atmosphere all participants in the common life and to give a direction and tendency to their interests and attitudes. It is as if the individuals of such a society were dominated by a common mood or state of mind which determined for them the range and character of their interests and their attitudes or tendencies to act. The most obvious illustration of this obscure social tension or state of mind . . . is the persistent and pervasive influence of fashion.[1]

Under our definition, society does not exist by virtue of purely symbiotic relations. Persons who merely trade with one another at a distance, who participate in a common, perhaps world-wide, economy, do not necessarily come to share the same universe of meanings. Their relations are not fully social. Yet this is not to deny that society may be spatially extended. Proof that it may be is furnished by those Britons who maintain their membership in their native society while residing at the outposts of the Empire.

Though a small number of persons may come to understand one another through immediate personal experience, large societies rest upon what the anthropologists call "culture." The common meanings and expectations that form the basis of mutual comprehension are largely transmitted from the past. The members have drawn upon

[1] Robert E. Park, "News as a Form of Knowledge: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLV (March, 1940), p. 683.

a common social heritage. There is a great body of artifacts and customs in the midst of which they have grown up and with which they are thoroughly familiar. Sapir has emphasized the close dependence of society upon culture when he says that the latter embraces "in a single term those general attitudes, views of life, and specific manifestations of civilization that give a particular people its distinctive place in the world."[1]

Anthropologists are likely to think of a culture as a highly integrated thing because in the primitive societies with which they are so familiar the different cultural elements have not only become accommodated to one another but have been fashioned in terms of the same values. Through a long process of selection under conditions of relative isolation they have come to form a harmonious whole—what Sumner calls an "ethos."[2] In striking contrast are the cultures of modern societies which, because of rapid change, are marked by conflicting elements. Linton discusses the whole matter as follows:

> Actually all cultures consist of two parts, a solid, well-integrated, and fairly stable core . . . and a fluid, largely unintegrated, and constantly changing zone of Alternatives which surrounds this core. It is the core which gives a culture its form and basic patterns at each point in its history, while the presence of a fluid zone gives it its capacity for growth and adaptation. . . .
>
> The proportion which each of these two parts of a culture bears to its total content may vary greatly at different points in its history. In general, the more rapid the contemporary rate of change, the higher the proportion of Alternatives. . . .
>
> The difference between folk cultures and modern civilizations, or between genuine and spurious cultures, as Sapir calls them, is primarily a matter of the proportion which the core . . . bears to the fluid zone of Alternatives. Folk cultures are borne by small, closely-integrated social units or by aggregates of such units which have already worked out satisfactory mutual adjustments. In such cultures, new items are not appearing with any great frequency and the society has plenty of

[1] "Culture, Genuine and Spurious," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXIX (January, 1924), p. 403.

[2] *Folkways* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1906), p. 36.

time to test them and to assimilate them to its preëxisting patterns. In such cultures the core constitutes almost the whole.

In modern civilizations, on the other hand, the small, closely integrated social units are being broken down, giving place to masses of individuals who are much more loosely interrelated than the members of the former local groups and classes. The very size of these masses confers a considerable degree of anonymity upon the individual and protects him from the pressure toward cultural conformity which neighbors exert in a small group. Coupled with this there has been an extraordinarily rapid increase in the total content of civilized cultures. Due to the organization of research and invention, new items are appearing with such frequency that our society has had no time to really test them, still less to bring them into readily assimilable form. Many of these new items are of a sort which will necessitate radical changes in other phases of our culture. Thus the mechanization of agriculture or the acceptance of organic evolution as an established fact entails a series of compensating changes in other aspects of our life and thought which it will require years to accomplish. In modern civilizations, therefore, the core of culture is being progressively reduced. Our own civilization, as it presents itself to the individual, is mainly an assortment of Alternatives between which he may or frequently must choose. . . . [1]

This differentiation of culture, however, does not signify that there is no longer a whole which gives rise to a common world of meanings. We may not all smoke, we may not all play golf, we may not all believe in a personal God, but we have some understanding of these activities and attitudes and can converse intelligently with those who do. Our society rests upon a web of culture, only a few of the strands of which are woven into the life of any one person, but a much larger number of which are known to him through observation and communication. In this sense there is a broad area of common experience.

The term "American society" immediately suggests a large territorial unit. That such a unit can be a true society is due to modern means of transportation and communication, which greatly extend and intensify social contacts. Over wide areas there can develop a common world of experience. Persons can come under the influence

[1] *The Study of Man* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company., Inc., 1936), pp. 282–284.

of a common stream of culture. Temporarily, immigrants will be unable to participate fully in the life around them. That is why we speak of them as being in the society, not of it. But such a condition can hardly be permanent in a world of newspapers, free movement, and universal education.

Foreign observers, whose judgment in this case is more reliable than our own, seem to agree that there is a distinct American society. A long line of distinguished travelers to our shores, from Alexander de Tocqueville through Lord Bryce to André Siegfried, have developed this theme.[1] Frederick Jackson Turner has given perhaps the most widely accepted interpretation of why our culture has been distinctive enough to produce an independent society. He says:

> American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character.[2]

And again

> In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics.[3]

There is no more sensitive index of a society's distinctiveness than its language, since all its thoughts tend to be reflected in its speech. And there is no more conclusive evidence of a distinct American society than the contents of H. L. Mencken's *The American Language.*

It is difficult to set exact physical limits to this American society, for it shades off into an Indian-Spanish society in the Southwest, a French-Canadian one in the Northeast,

[1] Their works on America, respectively, are *Democracy in America* (original French ed., 1835–1840), *The American Commonwealth* (1888), and *America Comes of Age* (French ed., 1927).

[2] *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, Inc., 1920), pp. 2–3.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

and a British-Canadian one on the North. It would be a mistake to assume that it corresponds exactly with the borders of the United States, for it probably does not go so far in the Southwest and perhaps extends into Canada across the Niagara and Detroit rivers from Buffalo and Detroit. The political boundaries of the continental United States, however, are close enough to the actual limits of what is here termed the American society to make it possible for our purposes of broad analysis to treat the two as coinciding.

This American society is a tremendously complex thing. It not only exists over a great area and includes more than 6 per cent of the world's population, but it has many principles of structure running through it. There is, first, the matter of spatial proximity. Everything else equal, we tend to associate and interact with those who are nearest to us. But so unequal have other things become that this principle is largely overlaid by other ones, except in small towns and the open country. Next is the principle of the division of labor. We come in contact with those who are involved in the same industrial or commercial processes as ourselves. These contacts may be superficial and in some cases hostile, but they help to fashion the structure of our society. A third principle is that of caste or class membership. The Negroes and the Orientals are forced to associate largely with their own kind because of avoidance by the whites. Recent immigrants find themselves in much the same position. Within the Americanized white majority there are class divisions, based chiefly upon income differences, which channel association too. Since so many of the leisure pursuits that attract Americans cost money, those who can afford the same types of recreation tend to mingle with one another. Finally, there is the principle of common values. Cutting across all the other lines of cleavage are religious and political loyalties that determine in some measure the persons with whom one comes in contact.

Underneath all these elements of differentiation in our society runs a current of generalized communication through our mass agencies of diffusion—the newspaper, the moving picture, and the radio. Reenforcing the mutual understanding and the approachability that come from our pioneer background, our national traditions, and our common public school education, this current gives us common topics of interest and thought which cannot but aid understanding, even though it does not stimulate general association.

It is in the cities that these various aspects of societal structure become most entangled and confused. One would need not four but many dimensions to plot them satisfactorily. And as time passes the urban type of life becomes more and more predominant. This fact alone introduces an element of increasing complexity into American society. Nor is this complexity a stable one. Because of the mobility of the people in terms of residence and because of the rapidity of technological advance, social forms are constantly undergoing evolution and changing their relations to one another. It would probably not be worth while to investigate in detail the social structure of one of our great cities, because before one had finished the task the results would be antedated.

Such is the American society with which we are concerned. It is obvious that its complexity is no guarantee of integration. The analogy of the tangled wreckage of a fallen building is sufficient to indicate that things may be very intricate and at the same time very disordered. Our problem is to discover whether our society is such a jumbled hodgepodge or whether it has the firm structure of a newly built skyscraper.

Since it is persons who are the ultimate units of social organization, it is persons who must be related in some ordered way if there is to be societal integration. If the American society were a small aggregate, it might be integrated on the basis of intimate personal relationships.

Affection and friendship are the chief cementing forces in small groups. But, since our society is a tremendous aggregate, it must be integrated, if at all, by some ties that do not necessitate intimacy of acquaintance. The only principle that seems suitable to the task is what we shall call "common orientation." Men will feel bound to one another either if they are pursuing a common end together or if they are jointly seeking to maintain some qualities of a common life. For short periods, nothing is more integrative than a desire for such a definite goal as military victory. But over the long run societies are chiefly knit together by a common attachment of their members to systems of value like those of a religion or of democracy, systems that define the character of the collective life. One can say that men's wills need either to be striving *for* some common end or *in terms of* some commonly accepted values. In both cases they are moving *together* and *in the same direction.* They can feel fellowship in the process.

Persons who are thus commonly oriented have a bond that makes matters of external organization relatively unimportant. When we speak of societal integration, then, we are not thinking of transportation systems, of interlocking industries, or of governmental organization. No matter how primitive the communication and transportation may be or how economically self-sufficient families are, if the people are intensely devoted to the achievement of common ends and the realization of common values, theirs is a highly integrated society. And conversely, they may live in a most complicated web of technological, economic, and political relations and still not possess an integrated society if they have few common ends and values. Those primitive societies whose social structure is dominated by religious values and patterned by the associated ritual illustrate the former situation, while the late Roman Empire illustrates the latter.

To make clear what is meant by common ends and values we may cite MacIver's differentiation between the common

and the like. "The like is what we have distributively, privately, each to himself; the common is what we have collectively, what we share *without dividing up*. The credits we receive at college belong to the first order, the college life in which we participate belongs to the second."[1] A common end or value, then, is a quality of life that each person may enjoy without depriving others of it. It may not—like freedom, for instance—always be thought of as a feature of the collective life; but it really is an attribute of that life, since it cannot be common without being general. This common orientation implies not only that the members of a society face in the same direction but that they feel it proper to face in that direction, and together.

Lack of common orientation may show itself either in what Durkheim called *anomie*[2] or in open conflict among classes or others elements of a society. In the former case the individuals concerned find themselves in a social void so far as guiding moral standards are concerned. The condition of *anomie* usually arises from rapid social change, which jars people loose from their accustomed social niches and throws them out upon an uncharted sea of experience. The society is atomized, so to speak. A quite different situation is that of class conflict. Here persons have fixed purposes and strong loyalties. They recognize obligations to others and discipline themselves in terms of them. But these obligations are felt only toward a part of the society, not the whole. The class integrations have developed so narrowly that societal integration is lost.

Such class conflict may exist underneath what appears to be common orientation. Thus the members of a society may all give lip service to an abstract ideal such as liberty, but this does not ensure universal devotion to any common quality of life. There must be some consensus with regard

[1] *Society: A Textbook of Sociology* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1937), p. 30.

[2] *Le suicide* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1897), Chap. V.

to what kind of liberty is meant. If persons in different classes are asked to expand upon their notions of the ideal, their definitions must indicate substantial agreement.

For the most part men rarely visualize definite ultimate ends toward which they are striving. Even during a war the imagined victory is usually not an end in itself but is thought of as contributing to the preservation of cherished values. The things men ultimately desire in common seem to be not so much concrete eventualities as qualities of life like justice, personal integrity, and religious faith. Such common ultimate values are not, however, always clearly formulated in people's minds. They are frequently received through tradition and lie embedded in a cultural complex from which the individual may never have bothered to disentangle them. But this circumstance in no way lessens their importance in orienting action.

Myrdal has well stated the situation of a moderately well-integrated modern society in describing Sweden.

> We disagree on all questions of the day, and discussion is our way of carrying these questions forward to solution. The discussion does not, however, concern fundamentals; the basic philosophy is common, the main direction agreed upon, and the disagreement concerns mainly the expediency of different avenues of action. There is not a harmony of interests in Swedish society; anyone who so reports is in gross error. The workers do not always have a common cause with business nor with the farmers. But under the accepted order of democratic government an ever-changing balance is newly created from day to day; the direction of these changes and, consequently, their cumulative effects upon the social and economic order are determined by the will of the people.[1]

The sense of nationality plays a unique role in developing common orientation. It is a common value unlike any other in that it does not seem to connote specific qualities of life but rather seems to include all qualities that are characteristic of a particular society. It is essentially an extension of the self of each constituent person. It is a gigantic

[1] "With Dictators as Neighbors," *Survey Graphic*, XXVIII (May, 1939), p. 357.

"we" based upon a common cultural heritage. Now the sense of self, narrowly expressed, is a like rather than a common value, since it brings men into competition and even conflict with one another. And, from the viewpoint of the larger society, this is still true when the self expands to include the family or other small group. But, when it enlarges so as to include the nationality as a whole, the selves of all nationals come to have a common attribute. The self-feeling therefore becomes an integrating force. Men desire that their lives continue to be English or French or American because, in so desiring, they assert their own significance.

The importance of symbols as integrative agencies is greater in relation to national feeling than anywhere else because here there is not the same opportunity for fundamental disagreement over the meaning of the symbol as was noted in relation to such an abstract value as liberty. Here the ultimate reference is to something that is experienced much alike by everyone, the sense of self.

The symbols of nationality are many and varied. There are the flag and the national anthem. There are heroic figures like Washington and Lincoln. And then there are ritual phrases whose meaning may not be fully realized by those in whom they stimulate patriotism. "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" and "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" probably function in this way in the lives of many Americans. Even the single word "Americanism" is probably an adequate stimulus to national feeling, although its content is, to say the least, vague.

The one great drawback to the sense of nationality as a common value is that it so easily degenerates into selfish chauvinism. It is true that the national spirit may embrace lofty ideals and thus help to knit closer the ties with other nations. But, on the other hand, it may integrate a society on such a low level as to embroil it in external conflicts and war. Then it is securing unity at a very high

price. It is therefore essential to investigate the objectives fostered by the national spirit. In the American case, are they such as to bring us into harmonious relations with the other nationalities of Western civilization, or will they bring us into conflict with them? The answer can only be obtained by studying the other common values of our society.

An integrated society, as we have been discussing it, is in some respects a moral community. Its members have at least a few ultimate values in common. No matter how many individualized ends, whether like or unlike, are being pursued, there must be some qualities of life that all respect and wish to have maintained. One cannot specify the number of strands of moral community there must be to produce a society that is satisfactorily integrated, but it is obvious that it need not be many. So long as there are a few broad objectives, which all unite in seeking, the rest of the social structure may be adapted to them in some organized way. Most of the ends and values of individuals may be divergent, and still the society will hang together, if there is a common core with which these divergent ends and values are not inconsistent.

In passing it may be noted that the common ultimate values of a society may not, in fact, be perfectly compatible. Anthropologists and psychiatrists have both commented upon men's ability to hold, without any feeling of contradiction, beliefs somewhat inconsistent. This shows lack of cultural integration, perhaps, but no lack of societal integration in our sense. So long as people unite in harboring inconsistent values there is still common orientation.

It is of course obvious that a sense of moral community does not require people to think alike on all issues. What is necessary is that they have some framework within which their disagreements may be peacefully worked out. Thus freedom of speech may be a well-established principle, believed in by all, in accordance with which men may voice opposing opinions on public issues. The crucial question is

not whether people concur with respect to the expediency of various proposals but whether they concur in the ultimate values to be realized.

Nor do common values have any implications of communism. The members of a moral community may believe that the cherished values for which they are striving in common may be best realized in a social order where each person works intelligently and responsibly on his own initiative. As a matter of fact the pioneer American community was one of this type.

Because the term community so generally refers to a local population aggregate, we shall not try to break from this usage. Actually the local community was formerly in large measure a moral community. It is this moral element that German writers have in mind when they say that community is not produced consciously and intentionally, but grows naturally out of intimate living together. Tönnies believes it is based on ties of blood, of neighborliness, and of culture.[1] This kind of a local, moral community, which is so characteristic of primitive tribes and of the villages in simpler civilizations, gives tremendous social integration. There is a strong sense of solidarity, of "we"-feeling. Outsiders are held at arm's length, even though fellow members of the same society.

This quality of moral unity in the local community has become vestigial with the decline of intimacy among the residents. The truth of the matter is that in everyday speech the term "community" has been emptied of most of its original meaning. All that is left is what is sometimes called an "ecological community"—common land, a division-of-labor complex, and common public services.

The principle of *moral* community is best exemplified in modern life by small, intimate groups like families, which have worked out an integrated way of life. On the larger scale of territorial aggregates it is seldom that one finds a

[1] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (8th ed., Leipzig: H. Buske, 1935), p. 14.

true moral community, because people who are striving to realize common values in one field have divergent orientation in others. Nowadays, then, it is perhaps better to speak of elements of moral community, rather than moral community itself.

What are called symbiotic relations are not sufficient in themselves to create moral community. Mutual dependence for sustenance may lay the groundwork for the development of common values or stabilize an integration that has been achieved; but man's powers of social detachment are such as to enable him to participate in economic relations without becoming involved as a person in them. Thus the "silent trade" is sometimes carried on among primitives without any truly social relations at all.[1] And the common participation in an elaborate division of labor, which is characteristic of our great cities, appears to have little positive effect in supporting societal integration. It is in the village or small town that symbiotic relations are most closely linked to social solidarity, but this is because such relations are there accompanied by an intimacy of association that gives rise to common values. Just as we said that societal integration was a necessary but not a sufficient condition of a good life, so we may say that symbiosis is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of societal integration.

It is, however, true that the character of the symbiotic relations in any society exercises a strong influence upon its values and therefore upon the type of integration it possesses. The elaborate division of labor of American society is not in itself integrative, but it sets the framework within which any integration must be worked out. Bricks and mortar do not guarantee the building of a stable structure, but, if they are the given materials, they set the problem of building such a structure in definite terms.

[1] P. J. H. Grierson, *The Silent Trade; a Contribution to the Early History of Human Intercourse* (Edinburgh: W. Green and Sons, 1903).

Society and moral community are thus concepts that pick out for emphasis different aspects of human living together. Society is the simpler phenomenon. One cannot imagine a moral community that is not a society, but it is quite easy to imagine a society that is not a moral community. This is not to say, however, that the dependence is in no degree mutual. Though it is true that common values must rest upon a basis of understanding, it is also true that understanding cannot exist in any broad sense without at least a few common values. For instance, a value-laden concept like democracy lacks precision of meaning without some sharing of fundamental attitude among those who use it.

A difference between a mere society and one that possesses elements of moral community may be approached in terms of Émile Durkheim's theory concerning obedience to societal norms. In his later works, especially his *L'Education morale*, he suggests that such obedience is of two kinds. In one case the individual conforms because it is in his interest to do so. He risks the imposition of sanctions of some kind upon him if he does not. In the other case he conforms because he has a feeling of moral obligation. He is following the dictates of his conscience.

To these two cases of Durkheim there should perhaps be added a third. Persons often conform, neither because they believe the rule is right nor because they fear sanctions, but simply because they conceive the matter to be of such slight importance as not to justify any conflict over it. Even bold men dress in the prevailing mode. The line of least resistance is to accept the rule and conform to it, though perhaps it seems an ill-advised one.

It is obvious that no social order can have much stability if it is based entirely upon the interest and line-of-least-resistance principles. The former means that each person obeys the code only when the penalty for breaking it overbalances the advantage to be gained. This tends to make the sole kind of equilibrium one of raw power; and if those

who share the viewpoint of the state's power agencies are a minority of the population, that power is shaky. Line-of-least-resistance conformity produces an equilibrium of indifference that is subject to upset by the slightest stirrings of sincere conviction. Such equilibriums are bound to be unstable by the very fact of change itself. Durkheim believed that all stable social orders have been grounded in a sharing of ultimate values by a large majority of the population. Sanctions, and especially the law, constitute an important way of consolidating an integration based upon common orientation, but they are powerless, alone, to produce it.

In a true community the moral unity is so great that sanctions are of secondary importance. The consciences of people are so similar that action falls into congruent paths without calculation of personal interest. Mere societies may come very far short of this standard of perfection and still be well integrated. During the Middle Ages, for instance, the various ranks or castes were in some measure disjunctively oriented, and there were even barriers to complete understanding among them. But there were all-encompassing religious values that kept these diverse orientations subordinated to a general scheme of common life and thus produced a remarkably well-knit society. A somewhat similar situation is found in the contemporary Netherlands. Here there are strong religious groups that form vertical sections rather than horizontal classes within the Dutch society. The sense of community is powerful in each of these, and to a marked degree they have their specialized cultures. But there are enough national ties and other common values to cement these sections into a cohesive whole.[1]

The danger of societal disintegration increases as the number of common values that are accepted declines. The moral foundations of sanctions slip away, and they become

[1] This example has been furnished by Dr. Ralph Danhof, who has studied social life in the Netherlands.

mere sanctions. Then the internal peace that makes understanding possible is vulnerable. Once the moral unity that furnishes the devotion to enforce order fails, the society is on the downward path, and it is only a matter of time until it disintegrates. Describing this process, Toynbee writes:

> The [dominant] minority, having lost the power to influence and attract, seeks instead to impose itself by force. The proletariat, inwardly alienated, remains in, but not of, the disintegrating society until the disintegration has gone so far that the dominant minority can no longer repress the efforts of the proletariat to secede. In the act of secession, at length accomplished, a new society is conceived.[1]

Robert S. Lynd, coauthor of the famous Middletown books, has pointed out the necessity, for a well-integrated society, of broad areas of agreement concerning ultimate values, areas broad enough to make sanctions a secondary means of social control.

> No large society can long exist which is careless of the element of community in feeling and purpose. The tactics of a Hitler are profoundly right insofar as they recognize and seek to serve the need of human beings for the constant dramatization of the feeling of a common purpose.[2]

Of great importance for the integration of a large society are institutions. Common values are much strengthened if they are implemented by structures. Common orientation is likely to be ineffective if it remains merely a state of mind; it gains power in proportion as it is precipitated in institutions. If our democratic values are to integrate our society, for instance, it is necessary to have them expressed in forms to which the people can feel loyal and toward which they can behave with respect.

The term institution is used in many different senses, not only by the public, but by writers in the field of the social sciences. Both the Constitution of the United

[1] *A Study of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1934), I, p. 187.
[2] *Knowledge for What?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939), p. 85.

States and a home for the feeble-minded are usually referred to as institutions, and even so simple a custom as that of tipping one's hat to ladies is sometimes so called. Though there is undoubtedly a common thread of meaning here, it is so entwined with other and varying threads as to make the term, as it is popularly used, almost meaningless. It is necessary to redefine it so that it will mesh intelligibly with the other concepts of our theoretical system.

Institutions are systems of social relationships to which people feel loyal because these systems are judged to embody the ultimate values that these people have in common. They are therefore expressive of moral community. Their acceptance need not be rational or conscious; it is often traditional or emotional. This is obviously true of such long-established institutions as the family.

Societal institutions—and these are the only concern of this study—are institutions expressive of so broadly shared an orientation that they become the focuses around which the life of a society revolves. There may be a few in the population who are indifferent or even hostile; but they are regarded as queer, and they are powerless to prevent the reception of the institutions by the next generation.

Institutions are accepted not merely by all who actually participate in them but by all who share the common orientation. For example, a bachelor can accept the institution of the family and believe it conducive to the realization of the highest values he cherishes. But personal participation in institutions brings it about that the acceptance or passive loyalty of the outsider is replaced by an active sense of moral obligation. Though the individual is within the structure, he does not feel it as constraining. A father plays his role in the family loyally, not from fear of legal sanctions if he does not, but from a sense of the importance of the family in the scheme of things that he values. It is this position of institutions between people's ideals and their everyday behavior that gives them their dual character as effective rules and as means to the realiza-

tion of values. Through them we keep ourselves up to the level of our best selves.[1]

Since institutions spring from ultimate values, and since these change rather slowly, most institutions are part of the transmitted culture. They arise within the mores and may be thought of as the most structurally evolved development of them. Whereas the simpler mores are mere morally obligatory customs, such as standing when the national anthem is played, institutions are elaborate systems of interactive behavior within which men take their places. They form the core of every stable culture.

It is not impossible that institutions should be created *de novo* to meet some radically new situation. The common values are not likely to alter quickly, but their implementation through institutions might, if it became obvious that the old forms were inadequate to reenforce the values under new conditions. Thus the New Deal may be interpreted in part at least as an attempt to substitute new institutions for old. This is to be distinguished from what occurs in the time of revolution. Then the stock of common values has withered away so that the society disintegrates and overt conflict ensues. A new core of common values as well as a new set of institutions must be developed if a stable society is to be reestablished.

A new institution cannot be precipitated from common values unless there is consensus with respect to the conditions of life to which the institution applies. For instance, collective-bargaining machinery will be accorded common loyalty in contemporary America only when all classes come to regard it as a necessary means of safeguarding American values under the conditions of modern industrialism. So long as any important class does not interpret

[1] This concept of institutions differs slightly from that formulated by Talcott Parsons as a result of his analysis of the work of Durkheim in that emphasis is here placed upon systems of social relationship rather than the normative rules implicit therein. See Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1937), pp. 399–408.

these conditions as requiring such a structure it will not become institutional.

An institution may be in any degree abstract. For instance, if we say that capitalism is one of the institutions of our society, we do not mean that loyalty is felt to any particular business enterprise or even to any particular branch of economic activity. We mean that it is felt to a pattern of practical activities involving saving, investing, rational calculation, free labor, competition for markets, and the making of profits. These are general types of action that go together to make an abstract system to which persons can feel allegiance. That system represents, if it is an institution, what they regard as the best way of effectuating their ultimate common values in the field of economic organization.

The United States Supreme Court could be cited as an example of a less abstract institution. Even here, however, loyalty is felt not to the members of the court at any particular time, but rather to the cultural pattern they embody. The Court appears to us as the right way of giving effect to the common aspirations we recognize. To the degree that we willingly submit ourselves to the Court's determinations and act with an attitude of respect toward them the Court is a societal institution.

Not all governmental units, however, can be regarded as institutions. If they are merely the resultant of individual, class, or group pressures working through to an equilibrium, there will be no deep loyalty felt toward them, especially by those whose interests have had slight influence on the product. They are then merely political instrumentalities. To be institutions they must reflect common values. Because of the intangibility of the criterion involved, it is often difficult to decide on which side of the line a given agency falls, but this does not invalidate the general principle of distinction.

In a static society with well-established common values, institutions could not conflict with one another, because

each would be a harmonious part of a unified system. But even here the members of the society might strive for opposing immediate ends. For instance, there might be struggle for the position of war chief. However, all would be loyal to the accepted system of selection. In a dynamic society, on the other hand, even institutions may sometimes come into conflict with one another. This is likely to be the case when an institution, formerly harmoniously adapted to others, is subtly altered by new conditions so that its role is no longer what it was. This change, unappreciated by the people, perhaps results in its working at cross purposes with the other institutions. Many would argue that this is the case with capitalism in our society.

The integration of a society like ours, then, depends upon the existence both of common values and of institutions. The former generate the latter, but the latter react to give outward substance to the former. Since it is our assumption that institutions are a necessary support to common values, one of our principal tasks will be the discovery of the institutions of American society. Once discovered, we can examine the loyalty to them and to the values which they express of the members of various organized groups. Thus will we be throwing light upon the role of groups in the integration or disintegration of American society.

CHAPTER III

GROUPS

If our study is to revolve around the effect that groups are having upon the integration of American society, we must come to a clear understanding of what a group is. Despite the centrality of group concepts in sociological systems, there is no authoritative definition to which one can refer. By some the term is employed broadly, so that any plurality of persons is brought within the concept. In the view of these theorists group members need not interact with one another. All red-haired persons twenty years old would thus be a group. At the other extreme there is the usage that makes a group a number of persons who feel their unity, who think of the collectivity as "we." In this study the meaning given to the term is neither so broad as the first, nor so narrow as the second. We shall find it expedient for our purposes to regard a group as constituted of a number of persons whose joint actions express the policies of a directing will. This excludes categories of persons whose only bond is that they can be thought of together. Men whose annual incomes are less than $1,000 do not, then, form a group. But our definition does not require that members have the "we"-feeling mentioned above. For instance, a master and his slaves would be a group, even though there is no solidarity based on loyalty. We adopt this concept of a group because it is units of this kind that are multiplying and differentiating in modern American life. No other concept would adequately embrace the phenomena we have set ourselves to study.

In terms of the concepts we have discussed in the previous chapter it is clear that a group may vary all the way from as

much moral unity as a true community to less socio-psychological unity than a mere society. A religious congregation, a club, a business enterprise, a family, a labor union, a national state—all are groups. There is no requirement of common values among the members; not even understanding of one another is necessary. The essential characteristic is that there be operational unity in the sense that the members of the group are all controlled by a directing will.

Just as the degree of loyalty varies widely in groups, so too does the nature of the directing will. It may be democratic and diffuse as in an athletic club or a learned society; or it may be authoritarian and centralized as in a fascist state or the patriarchal family.

The emphasis on will serves to differentiate a group from a mere assemblage or a random aggregate of persons. The collectivity must be organized, at least to the point of having some means of discipline. From this point of view the neighborhood in our large cities is no longer, if it ever was, a group, since it has no willed order of its own. For the same reason, social classes, in the ordinary sense of that term, cannot be regarded as groups.

Adherence to a group may rest upon any one of a variety of motives. A slave remains a member of the plantation group perhaps because he fears the consequences of an attempted separation. Many a worker regards his connection with the factory as merely a meal ticket and, though he fears no physical or legal sanctions, is reluctant to sever the relationship. Slightly different is the case of a club member who has lost interest but does not dare resign because of the injury that such action might do to his social status.

Even when adherence is positively desired, it may be so for quite diverse reasons. Many dominating persons enjoy mere domination. They keep their places of control in groups because they love the feeling of power that obedience from others gives them. On the other hand,

most members of voluntary associations are truly loyal in the sense that they realize the group is doing something for them. It gives them an opportunity to pursue the interests that they have in common with others. And finally there is that higher loyalty based upon a sense of moral obligation which holds most people to their families, most church members to their churches, and most citizens to their country. Instead of common interests we may here speak of common values, for the individual cannot separate himself from the group without wrenching his deepest moral convictions.

These motives are moments or elements in behavior, not mutually exclusive causes. Not only may different members of any particular group be acting on the basis of different motives, but the adherence of any single member may spring from several of them at the same time.

In order to carry out the central purpose of our study, that of determining the significance of organized groups for the integration or disintegration of American society, we must find out whether the groups foster common societal values among their participants and whether they inspire loyalty to institutions. Durkheim has called attention to the tremendous importance of society-wide, or at least society-representative, gatherings in fostering such common values and such loyalty. He says:

> Now this moral remaking cannot be achieved except by means of reunions, assemblies and meetings where the individuals, being closely united to one another, reaffirm in common their common sentiments. . . . [1]

He cites the periodic congregation for ritual purposes of Australian tribes whose sustenance activities force them to disperse.[2] That such reunions do have the effect indicated is certainly true, but it appears to be true also that any sort of group life that develops an awareness of, and concern

[1] *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1915), p. 427.

[2] *Ibid.*, Chap. VII.

for, the accepted values and institutions of the larger society is integrative, even though the group does not represent all elements of that society. Thus a family may stimulate patriotism much as a college fraternity stimulates loyalty to alma mater. On the other hand, we may find many groups that inspire no loyalty at all, not even to themselves.

One shortcoming of our procedure may be urged at this point by those who believe that *new* common values come out of so-called collective behavior, like crowds and social movements.[1] Since our groups are well defined and well organized it can be contended that we are not in a position to secure evidence upon any new moral order that may be emerging in America. The contention is sound. The answer to it is simply that we are studying the integration of our present order, not that of some possible future one. It is sufficient for our purposes to study the groups that are now well established, because it is through the influence of these groups that our present common values can be kept vital. Though it is tremendously important to discover whether a radically different social order is now in embryo, that quest would require a completely different approach from the one here employed.

But thus far we have talked as if we already knew what the common values and the institutions of American society were. Such is not the case. We must discover them as we go along. Since institutions are the more tangible and accessible of the two, we shall deal largely with them in the body of the study, deferring to the conclusion the crucial discussion of common values.

Fortunately the finding of institutions does not need to form a separate inquiry from the study of groups. Since groups are scattered throughout our society, we may use them as searching tools for institutions as well as employ

[1] See Herbert Blumer, "Collective Behavior," Part IV of *An Outline of the Principles of Sociology* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1939), pp. 219–280.

them as our primary objects of study. Groups are bound to come in contact with whatever institutions there are, because they reach into every nook and cranny of our society. Doubtless other probing instruments would be equally serviceable, but, since we are dealing with groups in any case, it saves time to use them.

We may liken the situation to the mapping of a new territory. The rivers, mountain ranges, and other surface features are the institutions. Our approach through groups represents an entry from one particular side of the area. It has no superiority over any other approach, because the final map will be the same anyway. But it is important that, whatever the direction of approach, the job be done systematically and thoroughly. We must not overlook any of our data.

In order to show the aptness of groups as tools for the location of institutions we may indicate the variety of structural relationships that exist between them. At one extreme, a group may embody an institution in its structure. We may anticipate the results of this study sufficiently to say that the American family seems to illustrate this situation. Though the institution we call the family is only the structural skeleton on which grows the actual flesh of family living, the whole institution is expressed within the group. A second possibility is that a group will be part of a larger structure that is institutional. An illustration might be some unimportant committee of Congress. Third, a group, though not a part of an institution, may be articulated with one. In such a case the institution acts as a framework within which groups operate. Thus the clubs of the Townsend movement are not in any sense institutional, but they fit into our institutional framework of free speech, free assembly, and a free press. Finally, a group may have no accomodative relation of any kind with institutions. A vicious criminal gang, for instance, respects none of the parts of our societal structure that express our common values.

When a rough estimate places the number of groups in our society at fifty million it is obvious that we must classify them in some way if we are to make our task manageable. We must put together in the same categories groups that have somewhat the same position in our societal structure. Thus we will be exploring all corners of our society with the least expenditure of effort. Since the directing will of groups has relations both to persons outside and to their members within, our classification will have to take account both of the group's function in society and of what we may call its internal role-structure.

We obtain considerable help in our task of classification from the fact that groups are objects of thought and action in daily life. Men have observed them, noted similarities, given class names, and even passed laws about them. Such concepts as the family, golf club, labor union, and university refer to well-defined types. They not only serve as symbols of group characteristics; they actually tend to shape groups in their images. Social life is so largely based upon expectation that there is definite pressure upon groups to conform to what is expected of them. A university, for instance, that does not live up to the public notion of what a university should be, is likely to suffer for it. And conversely, if a particular type of culturally established group is lacking where it might well be expected to exist, a sort of societal vacuum draws one into existence.

One proof that the cultural type is a reality is the manifest desire on the part of groups to achieve identification with some particular one. For instance, when the Young Women's Christian Association became well known, there was a rush of organizations having similar functions to come in under the prestige of the type name.[1]

A cultural type is not necessarily an institution. There are many "alternatives" in our culture—to use Linton's

[1] Mary S. Sims, *The Natural History of a Social Institution—The Y. W. C. A.* (New York: The Woman's Press, 1936), p. 8.

phrase[1]—which do not express general consensus or common orientation. Beer parlors, country clubs, and denominational colleges, to take three widely different sorts of groups, are well-known cultural types, but no one thinks of them as representing the common ultimate values of our culture.

Different kinds of groups from the point of view of role-structure have not been so widely recognized because this characteristic is not so important to the public as is function. But it is just as important for our classification, because the members of the group are as much part of the larger society as are outsiders.

Analysis of the role-structures of contemporary groups reveals at least three principles at work. The first of these is mutual interest. It is well illustrated by the relations of club members to one another. They need mutual stimulation, association, and support in order to develop along the lines of their interests and abilities. The second principle is that of caring and being cared for, of guiding and following, of teaching and learning. This relation of the stronger or more competent with the weaker or less competent is illustrated in the school and the charitable organization. Our final principle may be called the complementary character of tasks. In factories, for instance, men are tied together in an elaborate division of labor. This is clearly different from the mutual-interest principle, because what is here divided up might conceivably be united in one person—one man could make a car, for instance—while the very essence of a club is a plurality of persons. These three principles of organization within groups must play a part in determining our categories, for they are sociologically important.

The question of the limits of a group can best be considered in relation to role-structure. The definition that has been adopted in terms of persons under a directing will does not always clearly set those limits. Are the buyers

[1] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (New York, 1936), pp. 273–274.

from a store part of its role-structure? What of the depositors in a bank? Or the recipients of aid from a charity? Answers to these questions must be determined before we can arrive at any general classification of groups.

It would seem to be a sound principle to regard all those whose relation to a group is merely that of buyer or seller of a service or commodity as outside its role-structure and therefore outside the group. The theory would be that such an ordinary commercial transaction tends to equate the wills on either side and thus creates a gap across which the will of either operates only indirectly. This principle is subject to modification, however, wherever, because of special circumstances, the will of the group has a relation to the buyer or seller additional to the mere transaction one. Thus a bank or insurance company stands in a long-time, fiduciary relation to its patrons, and a hospital has control over the actions of its patients in addition to its claim on their pocketbooks. A close case is that of a newspaper in relation to its subscribers. In a small town where there is no competing paper available the subscribers are in somewhat the same position psychologically as the hospital patients are physically. And this is perhaps even more the case with subscribers to a labor paper. However, it seems true that in general a newspaper today is much like any other commodity. Readers do not feel loyalty enough to them to be regarded as part of the role-structure of the enterprise.

From a consideration of functional types and role-structures, it is apparent that there are many possible ways to classify groups. Careful thought and some experimentation have led to the adoption, for this study, of a sevenfold classification as follows:

Capitalist enterprises.
Struggle groups.
Governmental units.

Benevolent groups.
Families.
Churches.
Clubs, associations, and cooperatives.

The capitalist enterprise is distinguished from all other groups by the fact that its role-structure is an expression of complementary tasks, and its external orientation is that of making a profit through commercial transactions. The dominant motive is pecuniary success, and persons within the division-of-labor pyramid are essentially items on a balance sheet.

Struggle groups are groups like political parties, labor unions, and employers' associations which are organized to promote particular viewpoints in opposition to conflicting ones. The principal role within them is that of the member, and there is only as much of a hierarchy as is necessary to the fulfillment of group objectives.

All governmental units from the national state to a single public library are thrown together into one class, despite their great variety of forms and functions, because all are responsible to the citizenry. The fact that, whatever they do and with whomever they deal, they are acting back upon their own masters, so to speak, is tremendously important.

The benevolent group is in a class by itself because its role-structure is unique. It is the only group that centers its interest and attention upon the welfare of persons who are not the principals in either the establishment, the support, or the operation of the undertaking. There are two principal roles, the good-doers and the good-receivers, and the latter have no claims on the former except those that weakness exercises.

No argument is needed to support the separate treatment of families. No other group has so firm a rooting in the basic biological process or so important a role in the passing on of human culture. Both in structure and function the family is in a class by itself.

Churches as a class are not homogeneous with respect to role-structure, because some are strongly hierarchical and others are as simple as the simplest club. However, they have so distinct a function that it seems wise to treat them together. Their orientation to the most fundamental and broadest questions of life gives them a special status.

Clubs, associations, and cooperatives are almost identical, so far as structure is concerned, with struggle groups. But their relations to the rest of the social order are very different. Instead of living on conflict, they go their own ways, cause a minimum of disturbance, and are largely indifferent to what takes place beyond their own spheres of interest.

The purpose of the classification of groups into seven categories is to pose the question of the relation to common values in practicable terms. We have gathered together in each class groups that are so similar in their will relations as to tend to have the same position with respect to common societal values. Without analysis we do not know what this position for any particular class is, but it will not be too difficult to investigate it.

In each of the chapters in which we consider these groups we shall have three tasks: to explain the operation of the type of group in question, to probe the societal structure in and around the particular type of group so as to uncover any institutions which may there exist, and to discover to what extent that type of group promotes in its members loyalty to the common values and institutions of the society. The performance of these tasks should throw real light upon our central question: whether the multiplication of groups which is so characteristic of modern life is proving to be a disintegrative influence upon American society.

CHAPTER IV

THE CAPITALIST ENTERPRISE

The capitalist enterprise is the first group taken up because to it more than to any other of our seven types is due the character of modern Western civilization in general and of American society in particular. Whether or not one believes with Marx that relations of men to the means of production are largely determinative of the other aspects of a society and its culture, there can be no doubt that in our time at least the capitalist enterprise has exercised a powerful influence upon the rest of life. Sombart has pointed out in his classic work on this whole subject that capitalists have been tremendously energetic men and that their wills have been allowed singularly untrammeled expression in the capitalist enterprise.[1] It is small wonder, then, that this type of group has stamped its imprint upon all aspects of our culture.

The roots of capitalism run far back in history. Sombart believes that it emerged first in thirteenth century Italy.[2] But for centuries the capitalist enterprise was a foreign intrusion into the subsistence economy of the Middle Ages. For the most part life remained organized on the basis of the local community, the local market, and the inheritance of economic function in the family line. Even where there was a high degree of division of labor, as in the lord's household or in the monasteries, the work was done *for* the whole, and all received their sustenance *from* the whole

[1] *Der Moderne Kapitalismus* (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker & Humbolt, 1924), I, p. 836. My whole treatment of the capitalist enterprise stems from Sombart's analysis.

[2] *Ibid.*, II, Chap. 2.

according to traditional rights and obligations. In such a situation there was no point in accumulating money, for there was little to do with it except use it for consumption; investment and risk had little relevance to the problems of the people in such communities.

Two needs seem to have brought about the development of capitalist enterprises. After the invention of gunpowder, monarchs had to buy expensive military and naval equipment to wage war; and the discovery of maritime routes to distant lands made the merchants eager to finance overseas trade. The monarchs resorted to moneylenders as well as taxation, and the merchants resorted to individual saving or the pooling of savings. The monarchs thus brought banking houses into being, and the merchants became capitalistic entrepreneurs. This risk-bearing function was something new to the economic order of the age. It could not be subsumed under the prevailing principle of the just price, which was sanctioned by the church and based upon a minimum scale of consumption for everyone. Investment was too highly speculative for there to be a just price. Hence arose the notion of taking risks to increase a stock of goods or money, and there developed the desire for unlimited profits.

The growing power of centralized states also helped capitalism by enlarging the area in which merchants could safely trade. The governments encouraged the foreigners, "the strangers," to come in and vend their wares at the same time that they encouraged their own citizens to seek their fortunes overseas. Another stimulus was the discovery of gold in the Americas, which whetted the appetites of monarchs and business men for the wealth that could be thus secured.

But even after 1600, when capitalist enterprises became more common, they did not bulk very large in the total economic picture. Transportation was still too poor for many people to participate in long-distance trade, and there were not many productive techniques that required

large capital outlays in centralized factories. As late as the middle of the eighteenth century, according to Sombart, a small proportion of the working population was associated with capitalist enterprises.

With the dawn of the nineteenth century great changes came to pass. The enclosures in England had created a great landless class ready to become the factory proletariat. The capitalists had found the mercantilist paternalism of the state confining and were throwing off its trammels. The development of steam power was making production possible on a scale hitherto undreamed of. The growth of the United States after the Revolution and the falling death rate due to improvements in medical technique gave promise of a rapidly expanding population. The invention, a little later, of the locomotive and the steamboat made raw materials and enlarged markets more accessible to centers of production. All in all, conditions were becoming ripe for more capitalist enterprise. And there was no lack of enterprisers. The number and the size of their establishments increased by leaps and bounds. By the middle of the nineteenth century in England and by 1890 in Germany and the United States the dominant theme of life was that of capitalism.

The essence of the capitalist enterprise is the motivation of the capitalist. His aim is not immediately to satisfy his wants or those of his family but to add to a money sum. The object is to build more capital so that the business may expand. All other economic organizations in history have worked in response to consumption needs, so that there was a limit to striving when wants were satiated. With the capitalist enterprise, however, there is no limit to the drive of the capitalist, because the money profit is looked upon as a thing in itself, quite apart from consumption.

Since the success or failure of the enterprise is measured in pecuniary terms on a balance sheet, all elements of the business are subject to the finest calculation. In the full development of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries this

is known as economic rationalism. All other questions are beside the point but this one: "Is the contemplated action conducive to the greatest profit?" Labor becomes a commodity to be bought, like other commodities, at the cheapest price. The greatest degree of coordination is requisite, and this means a hierarchy of power controlled by the capitalists, with strict discipline throughout. All relations are contractual and are emptied, at least in the extreme case, of sentiment and personal feeling.

This rationalism extends also to the techniques of the work itself. Machinery is used wherever machinery is profitable. The closest attention is paid to methods of time and labor saving. The results of research are carefully studied so that the technology may be as scientific as possible. Wherever feasible, mass production and mass distribution are employed so as to obtain the pecuniary advantages that flow from quantity.

This ramified rationality is forced upon the capitalist by the intense competition of the system. Since, in theory at least, the law gives every enterprise an equal chance, the greatest profits are to those whose methods are most scientific, whose calculation is most accurate, and whose staff is best disciplined. Nothing short of the highest degree of rationality can survive.

The necessity of being absolutely impersonal and objective in the conduct of the enterprise has made the business a thing in itself. It has ceased to be a way of earning a living and has become an entity whose welfare is more important than that of its participants. In bookkeeping, in law, and as a technological structure, the enterprise is an independent thing, and men soon fall into that way of regarding it. Individuals come and go, both executives and workers, but the business (it is expected) goes on forever. The early capitalists held diligence, thrift, calculation, and adherence to contracts as the prime virtues. These are still virtues that the business must adhere to, though the capitalist himself no longer needs to do so.

The capitalist enterprise has a role-structure that is in a large measure dictated by the essential spirit we have sketched. It needs capital, it needs administration, and it needs workers. In the early days all the capital and all the administration were often provided by one man. Nowadays this is the exception rather than the rule. The large corporation has become the typical capitalist enterprise, with its many suppliers of capital, its large administrative staff, and its hundreds of workers.

In law a corporation is merely a voluntary association of shareholders, but in fact a corporate enterprise includes the workers as well as the providers of capital. If contribution of effort to the ends which the policy makers seek and subjection to their will are our touchstones for group membership, we must reckon the workers as even more certainly participants than the shareholders. Many of the latter have bought shares of stock in hope of a sharp rise in the price, without any notion of identifying themselves lastingly with the corporation. Sometimes they do not even know what economic functions the business actually performs. But the workers are in the midst of things, and their connection with the concern is vital.

The role-structure of the corporate enterprise, then, is composed of three well-defined groups, the investors, the workers, and a connecting bridge of policy makers, executives, and administrators. In the small business the relation of these groups to each other may be fairly close. A corporation whose shareholders are largely the directing heads of the firm and whose workers are few gives opportunity for personal contact and even friendship. The tendency has been, however, for the investing and working groups to become very large, so that the men who form the bridge do not know personally many on either side.

The workers of a capitalist enterprise are formed in what we may call a division-of-labor pyramid, with high differentiation of function at each of the various levels. Orders descend down through the pyramid as they do through the

various units of an army. And there are the same "line" and "staff" functions. In a factory, for instance, production is the line function, and there is a delegation of line authority in steps downward from the general manager to the foremen. Staff functions are auxiliary ones such as finance, engineering, inspection, bookkeeping, purchasing, and research. Appropriate staff officers are advisory to line officers at different levels.

The workers are thus placed in an elaborate and highly rational framework of coordination. As a matter of fact, this structure is only to a small extent thought of by the managers as a structure of persons at all. It is a structure of abstract processes, such as production, supply, inspection, and budgeting.[1] However well disposed the management of a large concern may be toward its workers, the latter are necessarily merely badge numbers on a pay roll. And this has advantages for the capitalist as well as disadvantages for the worker.

> The advantage that the corporation has over the individual enterprise and the partnership in the urban industrial world derives not only from the possibility it affords of centralizing the resources of thousands of individuals or from the legal privilege of limited liability and perpetual succession, but from the fact that the corporation has no soul.[2]

Because of their obligations to their shareholders, the directors must look first to profits. Whatever arrangements of the work or the workers will conduce to higher returns on investment are obligatory, and any plans for

[1] The chapter headings of a recent book by Balderston, Karabasz, and Brecht, entitled *Management of an Enterprise* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1935), illustrates this pointedly: Product Design; Setting of Selling Prices; Provision of Physical Facilities; Power, Heat, Light, and Ventilation; Output and Operating Standards; Incentives; Inspection to Maintain Standards of Quality; Maintenance of Standards of Plant and Equipment; Purchasing; Control of Inventories; Planning and Control of Production; Clerical and Sales Operations; Uses of Budget and Cost Data to Secure Control; Organization as a Means of Direction and Control; Personnel Management (two chapters).

[2] Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* XLIV (July, 1938), p. 13.

worker welfare have to be justified, not in terms of human values, but in terms of reduced labor turnover, optimum performance, or some other value that will show on a balance sheet.

The effect upon the worker of his position in the capitalist enterprise is to dehumanize him. In great part the skill and the mind of the worker have gone into the machine or its rationalized counterpart. A few at the top of the pyramid do all the thinking and planning, so that the unskilled worker merely has to perform a routine task. In the extreme case of the mass-production factory his motions are highly specialized and monotonous so that there is not merely a lack of total personality expression, but even of total bodily expression. One set of muscles is used to the exclusion of all others. When one remembers that these movements must in many cases be made in accordance with the speed of a moving belt or conveyor, one realizes the extent to which men have become robots. The roles of workers are threaded to a moving chain.

Nor do most of the workers have a vital conception of the whole to which they are contributing which might serve to give these partial tasks significance. To them their job is a mere means to a pecuniary end, hardly, with the exception of skilled workers, a means of self-expression at all.

The work gives the worker little status in the community. People can stomach unpleasant and monotonous tasks when they reap rewards of social prestige. But it is an exceptional job that carries any social honor today. There are probably more that carry social dishonor. This is an important factor in the discontent of labor and readily accounts for the pleasure that is frequently derived from strikes. A strike gives the worker an opportunity to assert himself in a public way, to attract a little attention, to be somebody for a change.

The attitude of the worker toward his employer and the enterprise as a whole is precisely what one would expect, given these conditions. Except in the small concern

where personal contact is still possible, the worker's attitude toward those higher up in the division-of-labor pyramid ranges from indifference to hostility. A German scholar interprets this as the natural reaction to a situation that is threefold "strange"; to wit, the business belongs to strangers, the worker's fellow employees are strangers, and the work situation in itself is strange as compared with his home or neighborhood milieu.[1] Further, the work must be done at a rapid tempo, there are rarely rest periods, the length of the work period is prescribed, and complete subservience to those in authority is required. All this is of course in radical contrast to the worker's situation in the subsistence economy of the medieval village or town. There, though he had to take orders and worked even more hours per day, he could work at his own speed and could enjoy the many religious holidays. Moreover he could see the significance of what he was doing, could, within limits, do it in his own way, and could feel a good deal of solidarity with the lord or the master craftsman under whom he was working.

In a recent book T. N. Whitehead maintains that even the regimentation of the large factory cannot completely kill the tendency of human beings who have been thrown together to develop a spontaneous social organization. His thesis is that this organization among workers does not look to those in authority for leadership because of the mechanical and external nature of the structure through which they are connected, but rather to particularly able or magnetic members of their own group. Whitehead is not referring here to labor unions, though they grow out of this situation, but to quite informal organization within a department or working crew. There tend to be two kinds of organization, then: the formal one of the division-of-labor pyramid, and the informal one of human beings living together. "Thus, whether he realizes the fact or not, the

[1] Goetz Briefs, "Betriebssoziologie" in *Handwörterbuch der Soziologie* (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1931), p. 38.

executive is in danger of directing a formed society from without; a society that will evolve defense mechanisms and sentiments of antagonism, if its social living appears to be in danger of interruption."[1]

The difficulties that this situation creates for large-scale employers who are really anxious to make the lives of their employees more human are almost insuperable. They cannot lessen much the rationalized specialization, because this would increase costs and be ruinous to the business in the competitive market. Mere bonuses and other pecuniary remunerations are palliatives that do nothing to solve the human problem of the lack of shared values between employer and employee. The ownership of stock by employees would no doubt do much if such ownership could be on a scale sufficient to induce the feeling of participation in the control of the business. But this is impossible of achievement under prevailing conditions without the outright gift of large blocks of stock from a magnanimous employer. Only "close" corporations and small businesses could do it. The attempts to obtain employee good will through better conditions of work—lighting, ventilating, toilet facilities, and so forth—and through recreation programs have not seemed to better the situation much. As with bonuses, these are often looked upon by the men as merely ways to get more work out of them in order to increase profits. When the employer has tried, for instance, through the provision of medical care for the worker and his family, to reach beyond the place of work into other aspects of the employee's life, he has sometimes had striking success in bettering relations.[2]

[1] *Leadership in a Free Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), p. 79.

[2] See William Inglis, *George F. Johnson and His Industrial Democracy* (New York: Harrington Press, 1935). A National Labor Relations Board election in the Endicott-Johnson plants resulted according to *Time* as follows: "That night good news went to the old man's yellow frame house on the hill. 1,612 had voted for the A. F. of L. union, 1,079 for C. I. O., 12,693 for George F. and no union." (Issue of Jan. 22, 1940, p. 19.)

But this too has usually been regarded as a paternalistic trick to keep the workers in line, or a sop thrown out in place of higher wages. The crux of the whole matter seems to be that the worker is predisposed to suspect the capitalist's motives. He is too aware of the pervasiveness of economic rationalism to credit any seeming divergences from it as genuine. He therefore inclines to rely upon the wage contract itself as his sole means of salvation and to demand that any money available for his welfare be put into wages rather than into housing or other schemes for bettering his life. It is only the exceptional employer who can break through this vicious circle.

The influence of the capitalist enterprise upon the rest of the life of the worker and indirectly upon our whole society is tremendous. Halbwachs and Vierkandt have pointed out that the monotony of the work is matched by a leisure merely pleasureful.[1] Neither work nor leisure is creative. The work is nervously exhausting, and there is not therefore available the sustained interest and energy for outside craftsmanship. And yet the worker finds it hard to let down completely. The tempo and character of his work carry over to his recreation, so that he likes tension in it too. Hence the popularity of sports, of wild-west movies, of amusement parks, of dance halls. The superficiality, the pure sensationalism of the life of our large cities rests back in large measure upon the character of the work and the social relations in the large business.

At the other pole of the capitalist enterprise from the workers are the investors. In a sole proprietorship or a partnership these are few and, typically, they are active in the conduct of the business. They do not then form a separate group apart from the division-of-labor pyramid.

[1] Maurice Halbwachs, *La classe ouvrière et les niveaux de vie*, (Paris: F. Alcan, 1913), pp. 447–449; Alfred Vierkandt, "Kultur des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts und der Gegenwart," *Handwörterbuch der Soziologie*, pp. 141–159.

Most of the smaller businesses in retail trade are still of these types, but more and more the corporate form is coming in. It is this latter that appears to writers on the subject as the typical form of modern business enterprise. Already 94 per cent of American manufacturing is carried on by corporations.[1]

A corporation is a form of organization that enables a group of individuals to act under a common name in the holding and management of property and in the distribution of the profits from transactions carried on. The liability of the shareholder is defined by statute but is usually limited to the amount of his investment. In this the corporation differs from both the sole proprietorship and the partnership, where liability is unlimited. This limited liability and the fact that the shares are transferable makes the stock of corporations attractive as an investment to persons having no working connection with the business. Since the life of the corporation is independent of any particular shareholder or group of shareholders it has an "impersonal immortality."[2]

The business corporation seems first to have been employed in overseas trade. The risks were great, and the required investment large. Hence the practice arose of a number of merchants contributing to the cost of a ship and "taking shares" in any profits which she might make. There is evidence that something like this was done in ancient Greece and Rome as well as in the medieval Italian cities.[3] But with the great discoveries of the fifteenth century the idea spread to northwest Europe, and the modern type of business corporation came into being. The Dutch East India Company, founded in 1602, was the first true stock corporation with permanent capital. The

[1] A. A. Berle, Jr. and Gardner C. Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933), p. 14.

[2] R. M. MacIver, *Society: A Textbook of Sociology* (New York, 1937), p. 303.

[3] Berle and Means, "Corporation," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930–1935), IV, p. 414.

bursting of the South Sea Bubble in 1720 brought the corporate form into disrepute, and it did not revive until the industrial revolution made necessary the aggregation of great capital sums in manufacturing.

The legal theory of the corporation is that its control rests with the investors, each sharing in accordance with his common stock ownership. When corporations were small and the investors were mostly local people, as was in fact usually the case throughout the early period of American capitalism, the legal theory corresponded with the facts. But of recent years a great change has taken place. Berle and Means in their book, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, have documented that change. I shall draw largely on Book I of that volume for my discussion of the contemporary relationship between ownership and control in the great corporation.

The policy-making group in a corporation is the board of directors. When all the stock is held by its members, we may speak of a close corporation. This is the usual situation in small businesses but is rare today in large ones. Among the 200 largest nonbanking corporations in the United States in 1929, Berle and Means found only 12 of this variety. The Ford Motor Company is the best known of them. Here there is no separation of ownership from control, and there is no problem of a set of investors separate from the actual conduct of the enterprise.

The second type our authors distinguish is the corporation subject to what they call majority control. Here those sitting on the board of directors hold a majority of stock but by no means all. They alone have full control of the business so long as they agree among themselves, because of that majority holding. Other investors may protest as much as they like without necessarily having any effect upon the conduct of the business. Here we see the entering wedge that begins to separate control from ownership. Ten of our largest 200 nonbanking corporations were of this kind.

Berle and Means call a large corporation in which those sitting on the board do not own a majority of the common shares a quasi-public corporation. In this form the policy-making will is usually not subject to the will of the holders of the majority of shares. One might think that it would be, because the board is elected by the shareholders. But such is not the case, except with local corporations. We shall not enter here into the complexities of control through holding companies and other legal devices that are used to ensure the complete dominance of the "inside" group, for these are being gradually done away with by legislation. Such legislation will not in the least affect, however, control through the proxy machinery, which is the most common method by which the board is able to pursue the policy it wishes without any effective control from the holders of the majority of shares.

Since most stockholders in large corporations cannot attend the annual meetings at which the directors are elected, their votes are sent by proxy, and those named in the proxies are incumbent directors. Hence the board of directors tends to be a self-perpetuating body, answerable, for all practical purposes, to no one. In theory its members are charged with the conduct of the business in the interest of all the shareholders, and certainly in most cases they carry out their trust. But there have been cases in which a small inside group on the board of directors has let a corporation slide into bankruptcy, thus wiping out the common stock investment, only to buy it back for themselves in a bankruptcy sale at a bargain price.

The extent to which the dispersion of stock may go and the amount of stock held by the directors may shrink is illustrated by some of the figures given by Berle and Means. In neither the largest railroad company, the Pennsylvania, nor the largest utility, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, nor the largest industrial corporation, United States Steel, did the 20 persons holding the most stock own together 5 per cent of all the stock. Of the

200 corporations mentioned above, 71 had more than 20,000 stockholders, and a total of 176 were of the quasi-public type.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that only these giant corporations are quasi-public in character. Berle and Means assert that almost all public utility companies, banks, insurance companies, and mining companies illustrate the three characteristics of the quasi-public type: (1) separation of control from ownership, (2) large size, and (3) public marketing of securities.

The importance of the quasi-public corporation is indicated by the fact that the 176 largest of them studied by Berle and Means owned more than 36 per cent of the country's nonbanking wealth. One of them, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, owned more wealth than the combined wealth of the poorest 21 states of the Union. If to the wealth of these large corporations were added that owned by the hundreds of smaller ones of the same type, the sum would undoubtedly amount to more than 50 per cent of the country's nonbanking wealth.

The significance to this study of the rise to dominance in our economic life of the quasi-public corporation is simply that it represents a further weakening of the capitalist enterprise as a social group. To match the workers with their lack of feeling of identity with the policy makers on the one side, we have a great throng (they are not really a body) of investors on the other, whose interest is only pecuniary and who know little about the policy of the concern except as that is mirrored in the annual statement. Berle and Means are troubled about the lack of protection, for those who own the concern, against misdirection and even malfeasance by the policy makers. They believe that the quasi-public corporation calls for some sort of quasi-public control. Quite as important is the recognition of the fact that these wholly rational investors, with no interest in the human side of the

concern, serve to accentuate the rift between employers and employees. They make it possible for the management to refuse legitimate demands of their workers on the ground that their first duty is to these investors. They can say in effect, "If we were the majority stockholders we would gladly forego a part of our profits in order to give you higher wages, but in fact we are merely the trustees for thousands of people whose right to their full profit it is our duty to protect."

The capitalist enterprise is becoming, then, a gigantic affair held together by a nexus of purely rational economic relations. The responsibility which this places on the directors and managers is great. They are not entrusted with the leadership of a naturally homogeneous group with common interests. They cannot have the authority that comes from superior ability willingly acknowledged by admiring and like-minded followers. Theirs is the difficult task of keeping in running order a group comprised of the most heterogeneous elements, containing widely divergent, even hostile, interests.

In performing this task the directors and managers are greatly aided by the fact that the capitalist enterprise is so thoroughly accepted in our culture as natural. The retail store, the wholesale house, the factory—each has a well-defined and established form. People have become accustomed to the activities of these different types of enterprise, and they expect them to endure. They are part of the environment in which we grow up, and we are conditioned to them as we are to the climate. They seem to us so inevitable that we participate in them without critical thought concerning their nature. Hence the directors and managers have merely not to lose ground. They must keep up the existent degree of solidarity, at the same time introducing the changes in technique that the competitive market calls for. This is a large order, but to men of energy and unusual administrative ability not an impossible one.

Is the general acceptance of the capitalist enterprise in our culture tantamount to institutional status? Does it represent the moral convictions of the members of our society?

The answer to these questions is a complicated one. We shall take the position that what is institutional is not the group itself, but certain aspects of its structure together with certain aspects of the frame within which it is set. Thus our people are not prepared to struggle for the preservation of the factory or the retail store if another way of performing the services thus performed should appear. We are not sentimental about them. Nor are we loyal to the capitalist enterprise in general, if one includes the impersonal treatment of labor as an essential part of it. But we are loyal to some aspects of such enterprises. We believe in individual initiative. We think saving should be rewarded by the opportunity to risk one's savings in the hope of making a profit. No matter how much we may think that the profit motive has been overemphasized or needs to be controlled, we believe, at bottom, that it is proper. The American people feel that the type of life they want to see lived in this country is served by the securing of necessary capital through private accumulation of savings and their investment. But we also feel that monopolistic profits are wrong. It is necessary that the whole setup be that of free competition. So conceived, capitalism is rooted in our mores. Neither of the two major political parties—and, since they are the only ones who hope to win elections, they are the only ones that count in measuring public sentiment—would dare to suggest the abolition of the capitalist system.

Though it is extremely difficult to gauge the attitudes of different sections of the population toward various aspects of the capitalist enterprise, the present position seems to be somewhat as follows: The employer-employee relationship is no longer, if it ever was, the expression of commonly held values. Not only are many workers in

open revolt against the impersonality of the system, but many onlookers, like professional men and farmers, are unable to approve a situation in which men are mere badge numbers. On the property side there is a more general acceptance. Most noncapitalists join with capitalists in believing that a man should have the right to earn a profit from invested savings if the field of enterprise is competitive. Some, however, distrust the extreme separation of the investor from the enterprise, which security markets make possible. Moreover, there is very general suspicion that many industries are not freely competitive, so that the rate of profit as compared with the rate of wages is unfairly high. In short, though Americans still believe in private property, they are by no means unanimous in regarding the capitalist enterprise, as at present constituted, as a morally defensible embodiment of the principle.

The farmers form a special class with respect to the property side of the capitalist enterprise. The independent farmers are themselves small capitalists, and they react to the large capitalist enterprise in terms of their Jeffersonian predilections. They disapprove of big business as being exploitative and lacking in a sense of community responsibility. The city laborer, however, is not viewed with complete approval either. He seems not to think primarily in terms of saving and investment in property at all—a thing that the farmer cannot understand. We may perhaps describe the farmer, then, as the old type of capitalist and the two city types as having diverged from his position in opposite directions, both thereby losing the sense of property as a community responsibility—the one because he is no longer immersed in a moral community, the other because he no longer thinks in terms of property.

The capitalist enterprise, then, represents in part an expression of common values, but only in part, since the really institutional elements are in the nature of an abstract system of principles fixing its property characteristics. The principles that fix the employer-employee relationships

are not similarly institutional. The two sets of principles may be logically interdependent, but public sentiment is not logical and finds little difficulty in giving moral support to one while denying it to the other. Many observers believe that loyalty even to the property principles of capitalism is waning, but the shift, if it exists, has not yet had any marked effect.

When capitalist enterprises were small and the local community still had great social power, as in the first half of the nineteenth century, it is probable that the whole structure of capitalism was more institutional in character than it is today. Because employers knew their employees as persons and because community bonds were closely woven, the conduct of these enterprises was controlled to a larger degree by the mores governing familiar intercourse. The enterprises themselves therefore seemed to merit more respect, and this was accorded oftener than today.

At the present time the capitalist enterprise bears, in many of its aspects, no close relation to the community life about it, or else the relation is one merely of power. Because it has escaped from the control of community mores and follows a highly rational, impersonal course, public respect is accorded only to those aspects of the enterprise which correspond to the area in which the average individual is, or would like to be, economically rational in his own life—saving, investing, and profiting in a competitive situation. As the number who might hope to rise into the capitalist class has declined, however, respect for even these aspects has tended to wane. The bulk of workers are feeling less sympathy for a system in whose fruits they will probably never share.

There are many illustrations of the lack of moral connection between the capitalist enterprise and the local community. The widespread separation caused by absentee ownership is best seen in the chain store. All important decisions are made at regional or national headquarters, so that the towns in which the stores are located cannot

possibly exercise any control over them. In fact the only information that the headquarters have of the local communities is such as can be gathered from business analyses. The only local attitudes and values that cut any figure are those that reflect themselves in sales of goods. It is true that in some areas the public outcry has been so great against these pure embodiments of economic rationality that they have had to make neighborly gestures, such as giving to the local Community Fund, in order to survive. But these gestures hardly change the essence of the situation.

Even more locally uncontrolled are factories managed from a distant central office. Here consumption is not chiefly local, so that customers need not be placated. Therefore no checks whatever operate from the local community. The management may, as in the automobile industry, advertise for labor in boom times, thus perhaps bringing in ethnic or racial types unwanted by the inhabitants, only to turn them on the streets for the community to care for when business slackens.

There have been various attempts to recapture some of the former public influence upon capitalist enterprises, chiefly through voluntary groups. The Consumers' League was an early attempt in this country which met with considerable success in obtaining decent working conditions, especially for shopgirls, by publishing a white list of "good" employers. Labor unions, also, have encouraged the public to buy union-branded goods on the theory that union shops were fairer to the workers. At present Consumers Union, an organization devoted to the discovery and circulation of accurate information concerning the quality of consumption goods, includes in its monthly magazine a section concerning the working conditions behind the products analyzed.

The relation of the capitalist enterprise to the community is by no means adequately portrayed as mere independence of the former from the latter. That is the negative side. The positive side is that the capitalist enterprise exercises a dynamic, often dominating, influence

over the surrounding life. An illustration is the effect upon a town of night shifts in a large factory. More dramatic still is the dislocation caused by the transplanting of factories. A community may be ruined and the lives of most of its inhabitants uprooted by the moving away of the principal industry.

Paralleling this decline of the moral connection between the community and the capitalist enterprise has been a lessening hero worship of the capitalist. One of the symbols of common capitalistic values has been the self-made man. Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, successful business men were heroes to the average American and exercised considerable influence as moral leaders. The "success story" became a sort of American saga. Gradually, however, the hero worship has declined, and the tremendous influence which the capitalist exerts is now more a matter of pressure and power, less one of moral authority. This control of the capitalist class over various segments of modern life has been too thoroughly analyzed by others to need documentation here. The press, we know, is subservient because of ownership by some capitalists and advertising by others. Political parties throughout most of our history have been dependent upon the donations of the wealthy, so that whichever party was in power the interests of the class were not likely to suffer. The professions, as Upton Sinclair,[1] Winston Churchill,[2] and other writers have pointed out, find that in general their interests correspond with those of the capitalist. In short, the policy makers of capitalist enterprises are the most powerful class in our society, and, like the powerful in all societies, they tend to make their will effective in all aspects of life.

This is most clearly evident in the economic dependence of all classes on the capitalists' analysis of the current situation. If the situation appeals to him as "sound," that

[1] *The Goose-step* (Pasadena, Calif., 1922).

[2] *The Inside of the Cup* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927).

is, if it appears to him that profits can probably be made. he risks his capital in expanded production, employment rises, and "good times" are here. If, on the other hand, he for any reason regards the situation as unsound, he does not push forward, and there is depression. The policy makers of our business enterprises are thus the determiners of the economic well-being of all. And yet they cannot be said in any sense to represent the willingness of all to produce. Production at a smaller than usual profit might employ more men, satisfy more wants, and bring more happiness generally, but it will not appeal to boards of directors and hence will not be undertaken. This situation quite naturally tends to rob the capitalist enterprise of some of the institutional status it might otherwise possess.

It is therefore a mistake to infer that, because the capitalists exercise a tremendous control over our life, they tend to give our society basic integration. If one looks below the surface, one sees that the tendency is just the contrary. The unity is imposed and therefore fragile. It was once accepted but is accepted no longer. The internal split in the capitalist enterprise between the employer and the employee is spreading outward so that it is cracking the outside world as well. That the cleavage runs through all aspects of our life no careful reader of the Lynds' analysis of Middletown can doubt.[1] There is no blame implied. The result is one that stems from the working of great impersonal forces, probably beyond the power of anyone to foresee or forestall. But it is true nevertheless that, with the shrinking of the number of aspects of the capitalist enterprise that may be properly regarded as institutional, American society is losing one of its main sources of stability.

Certain types of capitalist enterprise bear a less tenuous relation to common ultimate values than has just been

[1] See *Middletown* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1929) and *Middletown in Transition* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1937).

indicated. This is because they are conducive to other generally approved ends than those of saving, investing, and profiting. The most striking cases are fiduciary units and newspapers.

Security seems to be highly valued in our culture, probably because social change is so rapid that actual insecurity is great. Our world is so largely a pecuniary one that money savings are a principal means of security. The units to which we commit our savings, such as banks, trust companies, and life insurance companies, are thus not only necessary and proper, they are "right." One can almost say that we feel a duty to use them. But because we do, these units are thought to have extraordinary obligations to their patrons. The ordinary rule of *caveat emptor* gives way to special devices for the protection of the patron such as the double liability of stockholders. Indeed the patron is made to feel that he is a member of the group instead of being outside of it as in the case of most capitalist enterprises.

The reason that the newspaper has more of an institutional character than the usual business is that it has long been regarded as one of the chief props of our democracy. It is not its capitalistic aspects that inspire loyalty—in fact it is these features that are most frequently criticized—but its news gathering and dissemination. Because accuracy of information is the supreme need, we have given constitutional protection to the freedom of the press and have abstained from any sort of governmental supervision. The belief has been that competitive private businesses would be less in danger of distorting the news than a government agency. The rise of newspaper chains, coupled with the increasing number of communities that have only one newspaper,[1] casts some doubt on the soundness of this belief, but to date no one has suggested another principle to which democracy could safely entrust itself.

[1] See Paul Hutchinson, "What Makes Public Opinion," *Survey Graphic*, XXVIII, p. 376, where he states that in 1938 only 800 dailies out of approximately 2,000 operated in communities where they had any competition.

Radio stations constitute another type of group that may be in the process of becoming an accepted instrument of democracy like the newspaper. Present news broadcasts may be supplemented in the near future by television news, and this might have the effect of making the services of radio stations as basic to democracy as those of the press.

The omission at this point of what are usually called public utilities may call for explanation. Some might wonder if they too are not more institutional in character than the ordinary capitalist enterprises. This, however, seems not to be the case. Telephone, gas, and electric companies are closely regulated precisely because we feel that they may not conduct their activities in accordance with our common values. Because they are naturally monopolistic in character we erect extra safeguards against possible misbehavior on their part. It is the regulatory bodies rather than the public utilities themselves that are likely to be institutional.

Even in the cases of enterprises that have institutional aspects in addition to the property principles of capitalism there are still parts or segments of their structures that are not regarded as embodiments of common ultimate values. The employer-employee relation in the newspaper office and in the bank, for instance, is looked upon as no different from that in other capitalist enterprises. It is a matter of the push and pull of power and pressure. There is no sense of moral seemliness in the way the relationship is ordered. We conclude, therefore, that even in the most favorable instances the capitalist enterprise is only in part an expression of common values.

Not only are merely a few aspects of the capitalist enterprise institutional, but the experience of participants in these groups does nothing to foster common societal orientation. One might suppose that participation would at least engender loyalty to the property principles of capitalism. But this appears not to be the general fact.

Many young men who have developed a strong faith in these principles through their families, their schools, and other groups are disillusioned when they become wage workers. They find the system so impersonal that they feel themselves victims of it, and their discontent makes them for the first time suspicious of the principles at its base. If this conclusion, that experience in the capitalist system does not strengthen common orientation with respect to that system, is a sound one, such experience cannot be expected to foster common orientation with respect to other values. The first requisite for the development and recognition of common values is a vigorous and unified group life. This is exactly what we have shown is *not* characteristic of the large capitalist enterprise.

There is of course the final possibility that certain capitalist enterprises like newspapers and radio stations promote humanitarianism, democracy, and other broad social values in their publics even when they do not in their workers. It is undoubtedly true that Hitler has used these agencies to foster the conception of a German national community, though it is doubtful whether he could have been equally successful in promoting a less chauvinistic nationalism. In any event such an influence is not an effect of the capitalist enterprise upon its active participants but upon the passive receivers of its services. These receivers are marginal to the groups in question, and they hardly represent the trend toward the greater organization and differentiation of groups which is the central theme of this study. If there is an integrative force here, it must be studied by a quite different approach than that we have adopted.

CHAPTER V

STRUGGLE GROUPS

A struggle group is made up of persons who feel they have a common cause. Such groups are characteristic of complex, dynamic cultures rather than simple, stable ones. The differentiation of interests that has resulted from the increasing division of labor has been a chief reason for their development.

Struggle groups do not necessarily imply absence of all sense of moral community. So long as there is an accepted set of values within which the conflict takes place and through which its limits are set, there is a degree of integration. When, however, the struggle becomes one between systems of ultimate values, rather than between subsidiary immediate ends or means, the element of moral community vanishes. In any particular case it is often difficult to determine the degree to which there are elements of community present. We will find that contemporary American society constitutes such a case.

It seems to be a fact that the chief struggles of our day center around the distribution of wealth and income. The conflict of religious beliefs, which has so frequently given rise to embattled sects in other times, has settled down to a stable denominationalism. Our churches no longer call upon their parishioners for undying struggle against the heathen and those misguided Christians who are not of the true faith; or, if they do, the response is feeble. As for the struggle over political privileges, it too has largely died away since the enfranchisement of all adults. There remains a preoccupation with the things that flow from the possession of money—prestige as well

as commodities; and the inequalities of property and income have become so great that the arena of our conflicts is squarely in the market place.

The struggle for pecuniary aggrandizement is chiefly waged on two fronts: the economic proper, and the political. The conflicting parties in the former case we may call self-interest groups; in the latter they are political parties.

The struggle groups of American society are a reflection of our history. Into the present are carried vestiges of the sectional cleavages that have been so important a feature of our national growth. Only gradually have the class cleavages, which have been present in different sections since the pioneer days, meshed with one another to produce the national system of classes that is now emerging as the principal basis of struggle groups. These classes, however, are not so clearly defined as in European countries and students of the question come to different conclusions with respect to their number and makeup. But this particular problem need not detain us, for we are interested in the struggle groups, not the classes. Those classes which are not yet well enough defined to have come to self-conscious expression will not figure in our analysis.

Labor unions are the most clear-cut example of the self-interest type of struggle group in our society. They arose first in the most highly industrialized countries and spread with the spread of industrial capitalism. The decay of traditional rights associated with guild status forced the workers to bargain with the employers for wage contracts. Since the labor market was overcrowded, the individual workers were in very weak positions, and they naturally resorted to organization to strengthen their hands. This development did not take place, however, without strenuous opposition. Unions were at first declared illegal and suppressed in England, and throughout their history they have had an uphill fight to secure legal recognition and legal privileges.

The labor movement in the United States did not keep pace, relatively, with that in European countries. According to Ware, there are five principal reasons for this.[1] First, the unrivaled economic opportunities of this country throughout all the nineteenth century made it possible for men to leave the working class either by going West and settling new land or by rising into the employing class. Second, the working classes were not so downtrodden as in Europe, where the shackles, but not the security, of the preceding status society carried over to the new proletariat. Third, our laboring class was made up of the most diverse elements—men of different races and nationalities, possessing different cultures and religions. This heterogeneity proved a great obstacle to the development of unions. Fourth, America became the world's leader in mass production, so that the workers tended to be less skilled than those in European factories and to have less pride of craftsmanship, the surest basis of organization. Lastly, America's unrivaled willingness to introduce technological innovations rendered the jobs of American workers particularly unstable. The resulting extreme mobility of labor gave an insecure ground on which to rear a structure of unionism. Two of these conditions, that of boundless economic opportunity and that of heterogeneity, have changed decisively since the First World War, so that the labor movement in this country has been coming more into line with that elsewhere.

There are many varieties of labor unions. Each of these has developed to meet a specific set of conditions. Always there has been the desire to increase wages, reduce hours of labor, and improve working conditions, but the circumstances under which this desire has had to express itself have varied. The chief factors have been the form of the business unit and the extent of the labor market. If, as Hoxie has said, the principal function of the union is

[1] Norman J. Ware, "Trade Unions: United States and Canada," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, XV, p. 4.

"to guard the competitive area,"[1] then both the nature of the capitalist organization in vogue and the mobility of labor would be crucial for determining union policy.

The local craft union was the first to develop, because the labor market was local and the business units had grown up along the lines of particular trades. If workers in the same craft who lived in the same town formed themselves into a union, they could protect their interests fairly effectively. This adjustment, which was fitted to conditions before 1850, was soon outmoded by improvement in transportation and the growth of business units. The former made the spatial area of competition larger, and the latter tended to make crafts more competitive with one another. Hence two new types of organization arose: the regional or national craft union and the local trades union. These were first established just before and just after the Civil War. With further expansion and the employment of more and more unskilled labor, the skilled laborers found themselves competing with less skilled men in the same industry. Hence, lastly, came the industrial union, the first ones of which were organized near the turn of the century. This development was overdue. Its tardiness may be attributed to the heterogeneity of the workers, only the craftsmen among whom had been able to rise above differences of nationality, section, and creed to achieve organization.

The powerful units in the labor movement today are the national craft unions and the industrial unions, and their respective federations, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The craft principle as embodied in the A. F. of L. and the industrial principle as embodied in the C. I. O. are now struggling against one another quite as forcibly as each is pursuing its principal role of struggle group adverse to the employer. Their internecine strife is due to a different membership

[1] Robert Franklin Hoxie, *Trade Unionism in the United States* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1921), p. 80.

base and a different ideological outlook. We can only understand their position in American societal structure if we look more closely into these matters.[1]

The unions comprising the A. F. of L. have, in general, a craft basis, which means that their members are drawn from the ranks of skilled labor. They have traditionally accepted the capitalist system and have fought for their rights within it. Regarding themselves as the elite among labor and having a considerable pride in their special skill, they are loath to sink themselves in industrial unions that include the most unskilled workers. They are afraid that the differential wage and treatment which their skill commands will be lost.

Industrial unions, on the other hand, claim that the only effective way to struggle against the great corporation engaged in mass production is to organize all its workers in one great union. Thus the union covers the area of competition, which machinery has introduced, between skilled and unskilled men. Perhaps because the bulk of men in industrial unions are semiskilled or unskilled and thus have a smaller stake in the capitalist system, these unions feel less loyalty to that system and evince a greater readiness to invoke such weapons as the general strike. They also are willing to secure their ends through legislation, a means which was until recently scorned by the "business" unions in the A. F. of L. The industrial unions today are neither definitely loyal to the capitalist system nor definitely disloyal. If they can get what they want in the way of a standard of living and increased social status and power, they will be content to work within it; if not, they will seek to change it. At the moment they are trying to discover whether they need to struggle only for changes in detail or whether they need to wage a battle over the fundamental values implicit in the system. While they are in the process of crystallizing their policy,

[1] The only great unions outside these two federations are the four railway brotherhoods.

they are participating in a sort of free-for-all struggle for power of an opportunist sort.

It would be a mistake to regard labor unions as nothing but cold-blooded devices to fight the employer. Their main function has certainly always been that of struggling to combat low wages, long hours, unemployment, and unhealthful and unsafe conditions of work. But they have had other functions too. To some extent they have worked for broad social programs that would benefit their members and their members' children. They were influential, for instance, in the establishment of the public school system. They have always been interested in using their own organization for promoting the self-education of workers. And not least of their functions has been the provision of that group interest and support that every normal personality needs in order to feel himself an integrated member of society.

The long and bitter struggle that unions have waged against the capitalist employers has brought into being a most complicated labor organization. Besides the great national and international unions, both craft and industrial, and their federations, the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O., there are all sorts of city and regional federations, some of which contain "locals" from both the craft and the industrial unions. In general, all these organizations are democratic in form, with delegates or representatives of locals forming the policy-making body of the higher units. The national craft unions have a more decentralized type of organization than do the industrial unions. The authority is all delegated upward from the locals, very much as that of the United States has been granted by the several states. The analogy of the French governmental organization is more apt for the industrial unions. This centralization is due not only to the fact that industrial unions developed later and thus reflected naturally the increased spatial unification of our society, but is also due to the greater weakness of the semiskilled and unskilled worker versus

the employer. Strong national backing is necessary to the health of the local. It is said that the national craft unions, like the printers', grew up from the migration of workers, whereas the national industrial unions grew up from the threat of the migration of factories to escape high wages. The fact that in the one case the national unity came through the independence of the worker and that in the other it came through the independence of the manufacturer is perhaps symptomatic of the great difference between the situations of the skilled and the unskilled workers.

Leadership has always been one of the chief problems for the labor unions. The men who direct their affairs need to remain close to the working situation in order to appreciate the demands and requirements of the members, but they also need to have a broader education than the average worker and time enough to devote to the affairs of the organization. In the craft locals the usual solution has been to have a business agent, either directly elected or appointed by the democratically elected officers. The business agent carries on negotiations with employers on behalf of the union, enforces contracts, collects dues and fees, and often represents the local in the city or regional trades council and at national conventions. Because of his experience he is often chosen for several terms of office. The difficulty is that he sometimes comes to feel that he has a vested interest in the job and to resent attempts at oversight and control. When he no longer practices his craft, there is danger that he will lose touch with the attitudes and experiences of the ordinary union member; and his frequent dealings with employers make it not unlikely that he will come to share their attitudes to some extent. In the building industry particularly, business agents have frequently become irresponsible and highhanded and sometimes corrupt.

At the national level the problem is to secure men of sufficient education and breadth of view to administer

successfully a far-flung organization. The American labor movement has attracted few intellectuals until quite recently and has had to rely for leadership upon those who came up from the ranks. These did not represent the best minds among those starting out as workers, however, because opportunities to climb out of the working class to positions on the capitalist side of the fence have been frequent and enticing. The European labor movements have benefited from the relatively smaller opportunities of this kind for their members. Only with the cessation of mass immigration to this country have the obstacles to rising become comparable here and has the labor movement begun to find greater leadership capacities within its own ranks.

The strike is the most powerful weapon that labor unions possess in their struggle with employers. It has to be used with great discrimination, for there is always the danger of alienating union members by unnecessary or hopeless strikes, of antagonizing employers who are willing to bargain, and of irritating the general public, whose good will it is most important to keep. A strike is both wearing and exhilarating for the union members. If it is won, the strain is forgotten in the thrill of victory; if lost, the solidarity of battle is dissolved in the bitterness of defeat. The labor movement thrives on strikes only if they are successful, but many leaders have believed that it cannot thrive without them. One must again emphasize the importance of power and prestige as against the more prosaic questions of hours and wages. Men, even workingmen, want social status, and a successful strike gives them the feeling that they have shown their worth.

The labor union, then, is essentially a struggle group that aims to better the remuneration, the conditions of work, and the social status of employees through collective bargaining, involving as a last resort the strike and the bringing to bear of pressure upon lawmakers. It has come into full flower later in America than in the highly indus-

trialized European countries. Its greatest strides have been made since the upturn from the bottom of the Great Depression. It is more fully recognized by law than ever before in our history, and the public seems to have a better understanding of the conditions that have produced it. Employers as a class have not become fully reconciled to the necessity of bargaining with unions, but probably more of them are becoming so every day.

The antithesis to the labor union is the employer organization. It is not so necessary to the societal dialectic as the labor union because the employers are already in a strong position as against their workers. Indeed, there is perhaps more of an equality of power in the struggle when unions have individual firms rather than organized employers as their opponents. It may be on this account that one type of employer organization, that based on locality, has other functions of equal importance with that of resisting the pressure of labor.

The employer organizations that follow trade or industry lines are chiefly struggle groups, and they regard the maintenance of solidarity on matters of labor policy as their chief function. Their attitude toward their workers may be either conciliatory or belligerent. In this country such associations are usually more informal in their organization than abroad and cannot bind their members to decisive action. They are powerful, nonetheless, for their members almost always see eye to eye. Their common position in the capitalist system gives them a similarity of attitude that makes formal agreements unnecessary.

Of the same type but broader in scope is such an organization as the National Association of Manufacturers. Though it by no means attracts its full potential membership, having in fact only some 5,000 members, it includes the largest firms and is in a strong position to exert pressure with respect to issues affecting the whole capitalist system. Labor problems therefore constitute one of its chief interests.

The organization of employers based upon locality is usually through Chambers of Commerce. These groups have many functions in addition to the attempt to establish a common labor policy. "Boosting" the local community in various ways is often their chief activity. They are less exclusively class conscious than the trade and industrial organizations or even than their own national organization, and they frequently promote civic projects and reforms. They also collect information regarding business trends and distribute it to their members. When, however, a decisive labor conflict arises locally, the members are certain to draw together and uphold the employer point of view. The National Chamber of Commerce has a dual function. On the one hand it provides many technical and administrative services for the local chambers. Among these are the giving of information on markets, credit standing, trade conditions, the arbitration of disputes, and general publicity work. On the other hand it represents the commercial and industrial employers before the national government through lobbying, testimony at public hearings, and the like. Labor problems naturally are one of its chief areas of interest.

A principal aim of all employer organizations is to preserve private property and to maintain conditions most likely to preserve the profits of the investor and the employer's control over the business. This they do by seeking to keep the press favorable to their viewpoint (which is not usually difficult), by lobbying in state and national legislatures, and by striving for a united front among their members in relation to labor policies. Employer organizations have frequently fostered the idea of welfare work among workers by business itself as likely to lead to more contentment and therefore more efficiency. Before the passage of the National Labor Relations Act, such work was urged as likely to forestall attempts of employees to organize. There was not necessarily anything hypocritical in this line of effort,

as often charged by labor spokesmen, since some employers sincerely believed that the worker was better off without labor unions. Finally, employer organizations struggle against the tendency to put government into business. Though they work for favoring tariffs, they resist all attempts at governmental interference on the theory that anything more than a "police state" is dangerous.

The only other element or class in our population which has consistently formed struggle groups other than political parties is that of the farmers. Ever since the split of the Western and Southern farmers during the Civil War and the consequent rise of the industrial capitalists of the North and East to unchallenged supremacy in national affairs, the farmers have formed organizations of one kind and another to further their own interests. The first of these, the Grange, was founded in 1867 as a fraternal association with sociable aims. Farming was still largely of the pioneer self-sufficient sort, and the opportunity was not yet general for farmers to compare their standard of living with that of city dwellers. Hence they had little of the sense of disparity that would breed class consciousness. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, however, this opportunity began to appear and, because of the long decline in agricultural prices following the Civil War, the comparison made the farmers aggressive. The Grange broadened its activities and began to work for economic reforms. Since the farmer, unlike the capitalist and the proletarian, has no one adversary, his struggle must be either to secure reforms through political measures or to change the character of the economic system through his own efforts. Hence the Grange began to participate in politics and became interested in pushing the cooperative movement. These activities, however, were largely unsuccessful and the Grange, having lost much of its influence, returned to its original purposes.

Later in the nineteenth century the Farmers' Alliance, and in the twentieth century, the Farmers' Union and the

Farm Bureau Federation, the last two still in existence and powerful, have sought to carry on the battle on the economic front. Their chief nonpolitical weapon has been the cooperative, the rapid spread and general success of which must be taken as a mark of an effective struggle by these organizations.

The evolution of the Farm Bureau Federation into a struggle group is an instructive case for the analyst of social forms. This organization stems originally from a governmental source, the country agricultural agent. Such agents have the duty of keeping farmers in touch with scientific and technical developments and are jointly responsible to the Department of Agriculture and the stage agricultural colleges. The agents enlisted the support of local groups of farmers and others in their work, the groups becoming known as county farm bureaus. Thereupon these bureaus set up state federations and, ultimately, a national federation. This latter step was taken at a time when the bureaus were turning from purely technical interests to a consideration of the depressing economic outlook for agriculture after the First World War. Since the local bureaus began to form cooperatives and engage in political activities, the county agent had to be formally dissociated from them, though actually he may still work closely with them. What we see in this case is a class-struggle group growing out of a simple educational program of agricultural extension. A desperate need seems able to shape the most unpromising material into an effective weapon.[1]

Other classes or segments of our population have their own organizations, but for the most part these cannot be regarded as struggle groups. The professional societies of the doctors, dentists, lawyers, architects, engineers, educators, and the like are not chiefly interested in improving the occupation's position economically, although that

[1] Paragraph based upon statements in B. H. Hibbard, "Farm Bureau Federation, American," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VI, pp. 105–106.

may be one of their auxiliary functions. We shall discuss them under the head of associations in a later chapter. The only professional people who have become really class conscious in a struggle sense are those who, like newspapermen and teachers, are working for wages. Thus the American Newspaper Guild and the American Federation of Teachers are regular labor unions. In the latter case the opponent is not the capitalist class directly but school boards and administrators whom the union members believe represent this class essentially.

The first question that we must ask concerning self-interest groups is whether they exemplify, or are closely related to, institutions. Are there any structures in this general field that express a common orientation of the members of our society? Since these are struggle groups, we have the dual problem of determining whether the groups themselves constitute such structures or whether the frames within which they struggle do.

We can dismiss the farmer self-interest groups first because their situation is the simplest. They have no single recognized opponent as do workers' and employers' organizations. They struggle against all other interests to increase their share of the national income. Hence there is no definite frame within which they operate that could be an institution except our democratic system of civil rights. We shall postpone consideration of this system until our discussion of political parties. Nor are farmer's organizations themselves institutions. The urban population knows so little about them that, even if they were approved by all who understand them, they would not constitute a piece of social machinery that is approved by all social classes.

The struggles in which labor unions and employers' associations take part are waged on the economic front rather than in the arena of public opinion. In this area we have not yet developed a set of accepted rules of the game. The frame in which the contest is set is not well

defined, and our people so far feel little common loyalty to it. The National Labor Relations Act requires that employers bargain collectively with their employees, but there is strenuous opposition to many of the Act's provisions. Under these circumstances one cannot speak of a code of collective bargaining that has an institutional character. Not until the framework within which the struggle takes place is accepted by all parties can it operate to implement common values.

The failure thus far to achieve such an institutional framework is attributable in large part to the fact that the conduct of the parties to disputes has been stridently selfish. There has been little inclination on either side to accept norms for the waging of the struggle. It has been largely catch-as-catch-can, anarchic, often brutal. When the public sees only the exercise of raw power and violence, it is not likely to regard the process as expressive of its common ultimate values. Until there are some signs of self-discipline in terms of a conception of general societal welfare on the part of the struggling groups, the people as a whole will not look upon collective bargaining as a structure worthy of respect.

There is some evidence, however, that there is an increasing sense of public responsibility. It is because of this that many expect we are moving in the direction of a more stable situation. We are perhaps witnessing the pale beginnings of a new institution.

It is inconceivable that any struggle groups should be regarded as institutions when the frame within which they operate is not so regarded. Hence labor unions and employers' associations are not now instruments of common values. But if and when collective bargaining becomes a real institution of our society, it is likely that the labor union will become one too. The unions have been the chief proponents of the collective-bargaining principle, and they are so closely tied up with it in the public mind that they will almost certainly share in any

general approval that is accorded it. In other words, all classes of our society would come to regard the union as a proper way of achieving a just social order. Whether or not this will actually happen is of course speculative. One circumstance that might prevent it would be the decision on the part of industrial unions to work for a sudden and drastic revision of the whole capitalist setup. Then the property elements in capitalism, which we have noted as being institutional, would come into direct conflict with the union ambitions.

Even if the collective-bargaining machinery should become institutional, there is no great likelihood that employers' associations would. They have participated quite as fiercely and quite as irresponsibly in the struggle for power as any labor unions, and they do not have the saving grace that they are almost essential to the maintenance of a decent standard of living for a whole class. Employers have usually not needed to combine to hold their own against workers. It is unlikely, therefore, that their organizations will come to be regarded as bulwarks of the common welfare. Employers, to whom the capitalist system gives so much power over their workers, seem not to require any added help in the way of institutional props.

Since there are no well-established institutions in the field we have been considering, there is little tendency for the people who participate in these groups to develop discipline in terms of societal values. Though labor unions, employers' associations, and farmers organizations might emphasize devotion to the larger whole that includes them all, such emphasis is unlikely so long as they are locked in bitter struggle. They are naturally prone to put concern for tactical advantage first. The immediate victory is more precious than the type of order that will eventuate. Indeed, the designs that these self-interest groups set up for the social order of the future are singularly narrow in conception. Each shows concern for the

interests of one class that is in the center of the picture, but the design shades off toward the margins and becomes exceedingly sketchy where the interests of other classes are concerned. One can infer that the designs are not meant to be complete pictures, but only parts which the proponents hope may be forced into the larger societal pattern, as one might introduce a section into a mosaic. If this be true, it indicates that the self-interest groups leave all thought of the whole to the public or its agents, who act as referees. The groups have considered their job to be the bringing to bear of pressure in an effort to influence the ultimate result. Though they may have rationalized their conduct by the theory that societal integration is merely a balancing of pressures and may therefore feel that they are devoting themselves to the best interests of the whole, such a rationalization is not in accord with our principle of common orientation.

American political parties are struggle groups that accept democratic values but are interested in affecting the rules of the game within the limits of those values. As compared with the self-interest groups already discussed, they are less oriented to specific class opponents and more to the state machinery. Their ultimate aim is perhaps to control that machinery in the interest of what their adherents conceive to be the public good. The fact that the actual struggle frequently degenerates from one of principles to one of personalities should not make us forget that the conflict is fundamentally one of programs and policies.

Parties, as their name indicates, are parts of a whole. That whole may be called the parliamentary system, a system that implies a willingness to discuss differences of view on public policy and to take action only after such discussion.[1] Any segment or class in the state that feels

[1] I am indebted to Walter Sulzbach's article, "Politische Parteien" in *Handwörterbuch der Sociologie*, pp. 425–436, for several ideas used in this section.

it has nothing in common with other segments or classes cannot with consistency take part in parliamentary debate because one cannot debate ultimate ends or values, only proximate ends and means to them. On this ground French syndicalists refused to take part in the proceedings of the French Chamber.[1] In this country, however, we have not had such fundamental divergences of view as to prevent any party with a considerable following from functioning as a true party in the parliamentary sense.

We shall not discuss what may be called special-problem parties, such as the Anti-Saloon League. Because these are made up of persons who may have the most divergent views on all problems except the special one for whose solution they exist, they do not act like "real" parties. They do not expect to come into power and administer the government, but merely if possible to gain their limited objective.

Political parties that hope to obtain and hold control of the state machinery must have some ideological basis. This basis may be more negative than positive, since people generally have more notion of what they do not want than of what they want. However, one can usually find either explicit or implicit some fundamental postulate that accounts for whatever unity the party has. This postulate dictates the party's stand on what it considers the most important issues, and it will probably give a hint as to where it will stand on many other questions. However, since the members themselves are by no means united in their views on those problems that are marginal from their standpoint, it is dangerous to deduce a party's position on such problems from its fundamental postulates.

Until the onset of the Great Depression, American parties tended to represent sectional rather than class interests. Before the Civil War, one of the major parties represented the business interests of the North and East, the other the agricultural interests of the South and West. The

[1] Sulzbach, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

former wanted the centralization that would help to develop business, the latter the decentralization that would allow the farmer to be master in his own bailiwick. When the slavery issue split the Southern and Western farmers asunder, the Republican party, with the Northern and Eastern business interests in the saddle, rode into a 50-year period of dominance.[1] To this day the Democrats have won presidential elections only with easterners who could carry the fight into the industrial districts as candidates. In 1912 they had the additional advantage of a split in the Republican ranks.

The fact that sections like the "solid South" still play so large a part in our politics tends to make the two parties much alike in their programs. They are oriented to winning the presidency. That means, under our electoral-college system, that they must not offend any great class in any section where they are traditionally strong, and that they must try to pick up any votes they can where they are traditionally weak. Hence the great differences of view have been within parties rather than between parties. The national elections have been ideological struggles only to a minor degree.

The loose membership policy of the two great parties is conducive to the same result. They do not rely on dues from members, but on campaign gifts from friends. This is likely to bring them under the control of moneyed interests. Hence the gibe that their platforms have been nearly identical and equally favorable to the capitalist class.

In a country the size of the United States, and with its Federal system, it would be difficult to keep unity in a political party under the most favorable circumstances. There are so many local elections to be fought, over so

[1] A thorough analysis of the evolution of political parties in the United States is to be found in two books by A. N. Holcombe, *The Political Parties of Today* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 2 ed., 1925) and *The New Party Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1933).

many local issues, that only a lively national political struggle could keep the local party units in some sort of consistent alignment. But such a keen national struggle is just what, for the most part, was lacking during the period of Republican dominance. Hence the centrifugal forces of our decentralized Federal structure brought local politics into the ascendant. In most cases these local elections did not involve broad governmental policies so much as personalities or practical local questions. There was little to choose between platforms, but there was much patronage to be had under the developed spoils system. Hence the orientation of the local party organization tended to be the seeking of office for its own sake, rather than the desire to work out a cherished policy. This tendency is ever present in any political system, but it is usually checked by a strong national party organization that cannot afford to risk local inefficiency and scandal in the face of close national contests. With us, however, the tail successfully wagged the dog.

Under these circumstances the party is likely to be made up chiefly of those who have an ax to grind—those who want to hold office, and those who want favors from office-holders. The great mass of the public finds our frequent local elections for a bewildering array of offices too difficult to follow. Local politics seem uninteresting because there are few questions of policy and the personalities are unknown. Hence most "respectable" people concern themselves little with the party organization. They may nominally call themselves Republicans or Democrats, but they take no responsibility to see that their party puts forward decent candidates and adheres to a consistent program. Thus the "machine" is in considerable measure a reaction to a clumsy and legalistic type of government organization.

An American political machine is an elaborate structure whose function it is to secure for its participants pecuniary advantages by seeing to it that the "right" persons have

political power. Its main object is to win elections. This is done by raising funds and electioneering. Most of the funds and the "ward heeling" are donated by those who expect to benefit from the result. If the party's candidates are successful, those who have contributed time or money have a right to their reward. Some get positions in governmental offices, some are awarded government contracts, some find their underworld activities overlooked by the police. They are all therefore glad to help with the next election. And so the vicious circle rolls on.

The real leaders of this machine activity are usually not themselves officeholders, nor do they necessarily hold high positions in the party organization. They find persons who can constitute a respectable but innocuous "front" behind which they can operate hidden from the public eye. However, since these real leaders, the "bosses," are the men who can produce the votes on election day, they are the mainstays of the party organization. Even in the national councils their influence is inevitably felt. This is hardly a sound basis for national party organization, for these men know or care little about political ideologies and national problems. The results are inconsistent policies, frequent changes in the national organization as different groups come to have more or less power, and weak integration.

The only parties in America that have had much discipline and ideological unity are those that are not oriented toward winning elections—the radicals. They have a defined membership, require dues and party services of their members, and possess highly centralized organizations. Whether they make no headway because of, or in spite of, this seemingly more statemanlike organization is difficult to say.

Since the coming of the Great Depression there has been a change in American politics. Class interests have emerged more clearly and have begun to be reflected in

political platforms and political actions. Particularly the growing class consciousness of labor is having its effect. Whether this will result in national parties with definite, coherent, and stimulatingly different policies it is as yet too soon to say. But it would appear to be the natural course of events. If this should happen it would undoubtedly tend to the greater centralization of party organization, the participation of larger sections of the population in party affairs, the emergence of a more intellectual type of political leadership, and a weakening of the local machines. It is perhaps not too bold a prediction to say that political parties are on the way to assuming an importance in American societal structure commensurate with their position in other democracies of the world and with the theoretical importance long assigned to them by political thinkers.

In contrast to most self-interest groups, political parties are articulated with an institution that expresses common orientation—the system of democratic discussion and decision within which parties operate. This system is in part made up of what we call our civil liberties—freedom of speech, of assembly, and of the press. In addition it consists of certain structural features like elections and parliamentary rules. As a whole we regard it as our most precious heritage. We are tremendously proud of the fact that our forefathers were pioneers in this field and that the system that they developed has stood the test of time so well. Nothing we have is more certainly institutional.

It is because of their close articulation with this system that political parties are themselves regarded by all classes as the proper units with which to conduct this necessary process of organized public discussion. This means that they are institutional in their own right. No one party has this status, but the type—the political party—has. It is a cultural form that is a precipitation of common values. But we must not overestimate the amount of common orientation that this implies. We Americans

have agreed upon a certain type of instrumentality as the best method for carrying on our internal political struggles. We believe that political parties that win their memberships through persuasion, support themselves by voluntary contributions, and campaign for their candidates and their policies in the public forum are conducive to the realization of common democratic values. This is a methodological agreement, not a substantive one, and it may coexist with the utmost diversity of viewpoints on the practical problems that have to be solved.

When we turn to the active effect of political parties upon their members it is apparent that they are more integrative than are self-interest groups. To some extent they educate our citizens to respect democracy. Though struggle groups, they are articulated with a whole toward which they engender a measure of loyalty. It is doubtful, however, whether their influence in this direction is great, for in the heat of the political battle and with eyes fixed on the political spoils, ardent party members are likely to forget the blessings of democracy and the parliamentary system. It would certainly be a mistake to suppose that parties destroy or undermine common values, but it would be equally mistaken to suppose that they strongly foster them.

Our discussion of struggle groups has revealed one type—the political party—that testifies to considerable societal integration. It is not only articulated with an institutional pattern of democracy but it is in itself institutional and probably educates its participants to respect for our political system. The self-interest type, on the other hand, we found to be hostile to social cohesion. Though there may soon develop a framework for ordered rivalry between employer and employee which all will accept as right, such is not yet the case. In the absence of agreed principles of struggle it is not surprising that none of the rivaling groups is institutional in character. We indicated that the labor union might some day be

regarded as a necessary unit like the political party, but that day is not yet.

It will perhaps round out our discussion of struggle groups to indicate the role of conflict in societal integration. We have insisted that struggle is compatible with integration only when there are agreed standards in terms of which the struggle goes forward. This is true at any particular moment and is the proper way of conceiving the matter in a study, like this one, which is seeking a cross-section picture. It is also true, however, that the unregulated and unsystematic struggles of today may lead to a clearer perception of the essence of problems and to the growth of an institutional framework within which the fruitful conflict of ideas may take place. In other words, the conflicts of today may give rise to the institutions of tomorrow. But it is not true that they always do. They may lead to disintegration. And it is on this account that we cannot regard conflict as necessarily integrative. With respect to the question with which this study is chiefly concerned, the crucial point is to determine whether struggling groups do or do not acknowledge allegiance to certain rules of the game.

CHAPTER VI

GOVERNMENTAL UNITS

In no area of American life is the analysis in terms of will-centered groups so difficult as in that of government. A chart of the organization of Federal, state, and local governments with all their subordinate agencies would be one of bewildering complexity. Besides, the relationships are so circular, if one may speak thus loosely—from the people through elected representatives to government departments or agencies and back to the people again—and there has been such an effort to provide checks and balances through the separation of powers, that well-defined units of will are not easy to isolate. Perhaps it will suffice to recognize two broad types of governmental unit, each of which contains within it the most diverse groups and neither of which is independent of the other.

First is the territorial, citizen-based unit. Here fall the national state itself, the 48 states of the Union, counties, townships, cities, towns, villages and, strangely enough, school districts. The latter must be here included because they are just as independent in their particular province as are cities, towns, townships, and villages. They have been established in our governmental system as a territorial entity parallel to the latter, because of the desire to keep the schools free of ordinary partisan politics.

These territorial groups are made up of the citizens of the area together with their chosen representatives, the latter functioning somewhat as the directors and officers of a club. The citizen role is thus basic, but the detailed policy decisions and the administration of the law are delegated upward to persons chosen for that purpose.

The second type is composed of all those groups that perform special public services, deriving their authority from the people either directly, like courts whose judges are elected, or indirectly by delegation downward from the legislature or executive, like regulatory commissions. These units are really smaller wheels within the larger ones of the territorial groups, but to a considerable extent they develop independence of will. There is a tremendous variety of them, and the mere naming of a few will suggest many more: courts, executive departments of state and Federal governments, administrative tribunals and regulatory commissions, government corporations, public schools, public "institutions" like prisons and hospitals, and local water, police, and fire departments.

We shall use the national state as the typical case of the territorial governmental group. Its sovereignty is broader than that of any other unit. Hence it not only illustrates the relations of group members to the whole, which are manifested also in the smaller units, but it exhibits special features because of its inclusive character.

Modern political theory seems fairly well agreed on the proposition that the distinctive attribute of the state is the monopoly of ultimate coercive power within a given territory. Many other groups exercise coercion on their members—a family, for instance, disciplines its children—but it is only with the tacit permission of the state, and the state can at any time force the abandonment of such coercion. It is obvious that in many of its activities the state does not coerce, but it is still true that it can always do so as a last resort, and that no other group can, against the state's will.

The need for the state arose, historically, when conquests produced such diversity in the population elements inhabiting particular territories that only coercion could maintain public order.[1] There is no state in a homogeneous primitive community because the mores are self-enforcing and

[1] See Robert H. Lowie, *The Origin of the State* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, Inc., 1927).

leaders exercise whatever guidance is needed by common consent. It is only when this "natural" moral community ceases to exist that the state develops. In aristocratic or despotic states there are few elements of moral community. Rather the state serves the interests of a small group or class and compels the rest of the population to accept its rule. It is this situation that makes those who accept a materialistic conception of history regard the state as always a means of enchaining the masses. They believe that only with the abolition of the state can men be free.

The democratic state constitutes an attempt to make whatever coercion is exercised a matter of self-control on the part of the whole body of citizens. Since we in America have conferred citizenship on all classes, for all practical purposes our state is comprised of the adult members of American society so far as they are concerned with questions upon which they feel they must act as a body.

Although our democratic state antedates the industrial revolution in this country, the present character of that state is just as much an adjustment to contemporary societal differentiation as are the groups that were discussed in the last two chapters. The great population aggregates, the sharpening class consciousness, the opportunities for monopoly, the loss of the "natural" moral community at the local level—all these phenomena have created problems that government could not ignore. The old liberal doctrine of the "police state," of *laissez faire*, of a few simple rules within which free competition would automatically bring social welfare, has gradually been falling in public favor. People have turned to government as the most effective means of coping with problems that have seemed beyond the reach of voluntary effort.

One of the characteristics of this change in the state's nature is the greater emphasis on positive and constructive activities. Though coercion may remain the distinctive power of the state, the latter has taken on functions that have no coercive quality at all, such as providing recrea-

tional facilities, giving weather information, and building highways. There seem to be no limits to the services that the state may take over except the judgment of the people themselves as to what is wise to entrust to it.

An important new concern of the state is the land itself. The increased mobility of the population, which stems from modern means of transportation and an urban, industrial economy, has diminished the solicitude of the inhabitants for the future of a particular place. This solicitude was great in the old-fashioned "true" community because its members could visualize their children and their children's children carrying on indefinitely. The farmer took care of his land so that his descendants might enjoy its fruits. Today this is radically changed. The attitude of making the most of the present and letting the future take care of itself has become general. The result is that government has been forced more and more to show a concern for future natural resources, a concern that the people as individuals or as families no longer feel.

The human resources of the people have demanded attention also. This has been expressed in the great growth of so-called social legislation, such as workmen's compensation, minimum wage, maximum hour, and safety appliance acts, as well as the whole development of public relief. We see here the state forsaking its role of neutrality as between classes, at least to the extent of protecting the weakest against the gravest results of economic inequalities.

Another trend that has become conspicuous recently, though actually it has been going on for decades, is the gravitation of functions from the smaller to the more inclusive governmental units. This is a natural concomitant of the improvement of communication and transportation which has brought centralization in other aspects of life. The means of transportation and communication themselves illustrate the trend. More and more the maintenance of roads, for instance, is passing out of the control of the townships and counties to the states and the Federal

government. States are actively working in the fields of elementary education and public health, which were formerly exclusively local concerns. In turn the Federal government has taken over from the state, or shares with it, aid to the unemployed, regulation of labor relations, and oversight over security markets.

There is even some tendency to abolish smaller units altogether or to combine them into larger ones. In the minds of many people the township is an outmoded unit, and some counties appear too small for efficient administration. It has even been suggested that our states be replaced by a small number of regional units.

Because the role that the national state plays in the lives of the people depends not only on what it does, but on how what it does compares with what it is generally expected to do, it is necessary to state in a broad way the theory of American democracy. Once we have the expectations clear we can note the points at which practice comes short and shall then be able to judge the degree to which the actual state is regarded as an expression of common values.

The democratic state is expected to give every citizen a voice in the making of the laws under which he lives and to administer the laws impartially when made. Not even the most ardent democrat believes that every man will have equal weight in the determination of governmental policy, but all good democrats do regard the citizen role as basic and feel that the ultimate appeal on vital questions must be to the mass of the people. Although it is not expected that many citizens will be competent to deal with detailed or technical matters, it is believed that the masses have common sense and the ability to choose wisely between different programs as formulated by political parties or individual leaders. Whatever tendency there might be to irrational crowd-mindedness is thought to be adequately checked by constitutional provisions covering fundamental governmental principles, such provisions being hard to change. Legislative representatives, once elected, are

expected to take account of the interests and attitudes of their constituents in considering proposed acts. Democracy assumes that there will be loyalty to laws once enacted, even on the part of those who opposed their passage. The administration of the laws is to be carried out not only impartially but unselfishly. Public office is supposed to be a public trust.

This theory of American democracy is belied at many points in practice. In the first place, many citizens do not show the anticipated interest and knowledge of public affairs. They are ignorant either because too lazy to become informed or because too easily taken in by one-sided pressure-group propaganda. The number not voting is perhaps less menacing than the number who vote on the basis of a false conception of the facts.

The quality of men who have presented themselves as political leaders in America is also not in accordance with the theory. In general we have not drawn our best minds or our most unselfish characters into public life. This qualitative defect must be mainly attributed to the more enticing opportunities for self-expression and striking achievement in other fields, particularly business. The tremendous challenge of a vast continent rich in natural resources, together with the pecuniary rewards to be had by those successful in exploiting it, has led the majority of our most energetic and creative men into business and the fields of law and engineering, which are so closely allied to business development. It is only now, with the approach of a stationary population, that we find our most important and challenging problems to be those of social and governmental organization. It is hardly to be doubted that the realization of this fact will bring a higher caliber of men into these fields in the future.

The obverse of this same situation is the control over all aspects of our life, including the government, which the capitalist class has exercised since the Civil War. In so far as this has been a matter of hero worship on the part of

other classes it has not been incompatible with the theory of democracy. But much of the control has been intentional and selfish and to this extent has been inconsistent with democratic principles. Every important avenue to the mind of the ordinary citizen has been carefully watched, and the ideas passing over it have been sifted by this class. Of great significance has been dominance over the newspapers through ownership and advertising and of the public schools through membership on school boards. Equally important has been control over politicians. The chief means here has been the large campaign contribution through which successful candidates for public office have been brought under obligation to the capitalists.

Even more subversive of democratic theory has been the effect of political "machines." These have rarely operated at the national level, but they have been powerful at the state and local levels. The principle that those who administer the law do so impartially and in the general public interest is completely violated by those officeholders who are placed in power through "machine" efforts. It is this menace to democracy that the civil service movement has tried to meet and cure. Though it has made considerable progress at the national level and some at the state level, local government is still subject to the spoils system in most places. The spoils consist not only of public jobs for the loyal "machine" workers but protection of vice resorts, the awarding of public contracts to supporters, and the passage of ordinances that favor their interests. When one sees how many people gain advantages by these activities, it is not surprising that all attempts at reform have met stubborn resistance and that, even when temporarily successful, they usually give way again to the forces of corruption.

Despite the many weaknesses and failings of our governmental machinery there can be no question that certain elements of the national state are expressions of ultimate values common to Americans. Indeed the state seems to fall roughly into an institutional and a noninstitutional

part. The former is made up of the constitutional, the formal, and the traditional features—the accepted frame of government; the latter, of the laws and the machinery that are still controversial. One seems good to everybody; the other, only to a majority. Here we come upon the central problem of the democratic state. It must respond to the differing views of the various sections of the population, and yet it must inspire the respect of all. The *modus vivendi* seems to be a lively struggle among conflicting views on current issues, which gradually subsides after effective decisions, until the rules adopted melt into the accepted structure of the state.

That the whole body of law at any time is not institutional is clearly illustrated by our experience with the prohibition amendment and by the attitudes of business leaders toward New Deal legislation. It is asking too much of human nature to expect that men who have recently bitterly opposed the passage of an act will turn around and treat it as an embodiment of their ultimate values once it has become law.

Yet it is perfectly clear that our state could not hang together if there were such dissatisfied groups with respect to all features of it. Although struggles arising from conflicting interests, and enforcement through sanctions will always be characteristic of a democratic state dealing with a highly differentiated society, there cannot be a peaceful settlement of issues without some structural principles to which all give adherence and which make the system hold together well enough to operate at all. The traditional frame of government acquires this necessary institutional character for two reasons. First, much of it is embodied in a written constitution that is difficult to change. This tends to mean that it represents the mature thought of the whole citizenry. Second, the continuing existence of these governmental forms which change only very slowly operates to "condition" all classes of the society to them. They seem to be part of the natural order of things, to be right.

We grow up to accept them very much as we do the succession of the seasons or the shape of the earth.

Although we must conclude that some elements of the governmental structure are institutional, we cannot expect that an increasing proportion will become so. If it is true that newly enacted laws and newly created bureaus and commissions tend to remain sources of contention, then we are likely continually to have new areas of friction. For ours is a rapidly changing society that can hardly wait for the "natural" growth of voluntary groups to take care of new functions. The state for us is a sort of residual agency to which are entrusted functions generally thought to be in need of performance, but unsuited to the abilities of any other existing agency. This process is not surprising because the state is the one group that is both sensitive to the desires of the people and able to compel obedience. It is at the same time a dangerous process since it throws together many unrelated things and prevents the government from becoming a harmoniously integrated whole. It puts tremendous responsibilities upon officeholders, complicates governmental machinery, and brings with it the risk that bureaucracy will become so remote from the people as to be irresponsible. However, no alternative appears possible until such time as our society becomes more settled. Then, either there will be opportunity for the slow growth of spontaneous groups to take over the satisfaction of newly felt needs, or the government itself will move slowly enough in acquiring new functions to ensure that they represent the expression of truly common values.

Behind the institutional frame of government, and giving it its character, are two sets of common values, those of democracy and those of nationality. The state appears to Americans as the most complete exemplification of both these principles. On the one hand it is the cumulative embodiment of the efforts of many generations of Americans to secure political self-expression; on the other, it is the most obvious manifestation of the fact of a distinctive

American society. Either of these alone would tend to give to some aspects of governmental structure institutional status. Together they guarantee it.

It must be admitted, however, that Fourth of July orators make one feel that the state expresses moral community at points where it does not. The slogans of the excited patriot are notoriously vague. He proclaims, for instance, that the American state ensures liberty for all. He seems to mean full opportunity for personal development. But this is obviously not the case, since our governmental system guarantees only freedom of the press, of speech, of assembly and petition, and of religion. It does not ensure the opportunity to work and support one's family, a type of freedom that, many would infer, is covered in the idea of liberty. Thus our state is made to stand for values that either are not common, or, being common, are not implemented by the state.

In view of the state's embodiment of both democratic and national values it is natural that the participation of a citizen in it is an integrative experience. In the first place, political discussions and voting are forms of self-expression that lead us to cherish political freedom as a common ultimate value. It is true that sometimes we feel so strongly about a particular issue as to wish to suppress the opposition, but that is a partial and temporary state of mind. In the main it seems to be true that nothing kindles enthusiasm for democratic values like democratic practice. Secondly, activity as a citizen undoubtedly fosters the sense of nationality. Although there are many other ways in which this sense of cultural unity is developed, perhaps the most important channel is through the state. Our national heroes have almost all been associated with the state. This is perhaps because the sense of nationality is always an in-group feeling that thrives upon contrasts with out-groups, and the organized state is the most obvious expression of in-group feeling. The mass of men identify themselves with a dramatic military or diplomatic hero because they

can feel personal superiority in the collective superiority that he symbolizes. "We" have won over "them."

Most of the governmental units of our second type—those performing special public services—are in the institutional sphere of government. Courts, executive departments, prisons, public hospitals, libraries, and schools are thoroughly accepted elements of our governmental structure. They are regarded as integral aspects of the democratic system. Only newer structures, like some of the regulatory commissions and government corporations, are looked upon as insufficiently tested to be institutional in character. At the moment the National Labor Relations Board and the Tennessee Valley Authority offer good illustrations. The propriety of their establishment is still too bitterly contested for them to have assumed an accepted place in the scheme of things. They are not a reflection of basic integration nor do they generate such integration. That will only come if they perform a service ultimately acknowledged by all to be an expression of common orientation.

It is interesting that the governmental bureaucracy—Federal, state, and local—has never occupied the position with us that it did before 1914 in Germany, where it was a symbol of the strength and moral quality of the national life. Because we have believed that "the less government the better," we have often regarded the bureaucracy as an impediment to the realization of common values. Only with the development of the civil service ideal has the opposite point of view found any place. It will grow only so fast as governmental servants show themselves loyal adherents to a common scheme of values.

There has been a multiplication of special governmental units with the increasing number of governmental tasks. Excepting courts, which have an independent status, these service agencies are dependent from legislative bodies or executive offices. We cannot possibly consider all the various types of agencies but will have to content ourselves

with singling out four broad categories for brief attention. These four are: (1) executive departments, regulatory commissions, and courts; (2) public welfare "institutions"; (3) government corporations; and (4) educational units.

Under the category executive departments, regulatory commissions, and courts are included all those groups which have to do with the administration of the law but which do not give rise to units that became partly independent of the political structure. Thus police departments, state highway departments, the national Department of Commerce, the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the local, state, and Federal courts are included, whereas those commissions which exercise control over hospitals, libraries, prisons, and schools are excluded. The categorization is obviously not in terms of any formal notions of delegation of authority but in terms of social structure.

All these agencies are characterized by special functions for the carrying out of which there are staffs, ranging all the way from a single judge and a court stenographer on the one hand to the tens of thousands of employees of the United States Post Office on the other. Though many of the subordinate categories are under civil service, most of the superordinate functionaries are subject to the vicissitudes of political appointment. However, these agencies are less immediately dependent upon the popular will than legislatures.

It is difficult to say to what extent these agencies constitute separate will-units. Some, like courts and regulatory commissions, are controlled merely by the constitutional provisions, legislative enactments, or legal precedents that prescribe their duties and functions; within this rather abstract frame they have considerable freedom of action. Theoretically their policy-making function is limited, but actually it is great. Others, like the Federal Treasury Department, are much less independent, and their chief officials are much less policy makers and much more the instruments of the policies of those higher up. In some-

what the degree to which these agencies are independent do their staffs have a feeling of *esprit de corps* based on professionalized competence and service. There is a difficult problem of how to reconcile responsibility to the public with freedom to act on the basis of specialized knowledge and unbiased perception. All such governmental agencies must steer between the Scylla of transitory popular enthusiasms and the Charybdis of irresponsible personal predilections. It is a course not easy to chart, much less to navigate.

The multiplication of governmental functions has naturally been reflected in a diversification of such agencies. Particularly significant is the rise of the regulatory commission, because it is in direct contrast to our constitutional theory of the separation of powers. The commissions have in some degree legislative, judicial, and executive functions. Such agencies as the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the state workmen's compensation boards, banking commissions, and public utility commissions represent the coming of the expert body into governmental administration. The complications of modern life make the ministrations of the traditional legislative, executive, and judicial units inefficient and cumbersome in certain highly specialized fields, and they have therefore been in large part superseded by such regulatory commissions. The members of commissions can be chosen for their knowledge of the particular field, and this knowledge can be at the disposal of the public uninterruptedly.

One cannot argue that the governmental agencies we have been considering have much integrative effect in our society. Even though the proportion of devoted public servants on their staffs may be considerable, their absolute number is small in comparison with the total population. And those members of the public who come into contact with these agencies are probably repelled as often as they are attracted by the activities of the government. For every person who is filled with enthusiasm for democracy by the services of a fire department there may be one who is antagonized

by the decision of some tribunal. And in between are the great bulk of citizens who accept services of public agencies in about the same casual way as they do those of capitalist enterprises.

We use the term governmental "institutions" for public hospitals, prisons, and the like because that is the customary expression. We must emphasize, however, that the individual units are not institutions in the sense in which we have been using the term, though they are usually expressive of such institutions in that they exemplify structural patterns representing accepted ways of satisfying common ultimate values.

Usually such governmental "institutions" are under the control of boards appointed by the appropriate executive officer—Federal, state, or local. These boards select administrative officers and staffs very much as do the boards of social agencies. Though the majority of the board members are usually of the same political party as the appointing officer, there is often considerable independence of politics. This is partly because such undertakings as prisons and hospitals have to do with tasks the carrying out of which is not likely to be a matter of partisan difference of opinion. Also, in such "institutions," as in social agencies, the professional staff becomes of great importance in the making of policy through its advice and its daily conduct of the enterprise.

Although other groups operate hospitals (and because of this their treatment will be deferred to the next chapter), only the state may operate prisons and reformatories. This testifies to the validity of the principle that the power to coerce is the distinguishing attribute of the state, and it shows that there is a tendency toward a monopoly of that power. The state no longer delegates much of it as it did in the days of slavery and private workhouses.

In our complicated governmental system there are penal "institutions" for every level of authority—local, state, and national. Usually the local lockups and jails are

administered by police departments or sheriff's offices; it is only the state and Federal prisons that come under the direct control of specially designated boards. But since the length of time served by criminals in state and Federal prisons is much longer than in local jails and lock-ups, and since in many states the state board or commission has the duty of inspecting the town, county, and city jails, the chief responsibility for the good or ill effect of the penal system falls upon state and Federal officials.

The tasks that a prison is expected to carry out are the protection of the rest of society from persons whose value-schemes are aberrant, and the reorienting or retraining of such persons during the period of their incarceration. The hope is that when they are freed they will live in accordance with the accepted norms of conduct. This is a tremendously difficult task, given the most favorable circumstances, because the life orientation of persons, especially adults, is not easily changed. It is obvious that only the very highest caliber of personnel from top to bottom and only the most carefully studied arrangements and facilities would prove successful. In general we have not had such personnel and such organization. The board or commission members have frequently been "political" appointees with no particular qualifications for their positions. Wardens have frequently been chosen from those who have come up through the ranks from prison guard and are likely to be more notable for the severity of their discipline than for its success in reshaping the character of prisoners. Naturally the staffs that such men choose to work under them have tended to be of the same quality.

Of recent years, however, a great change has begun. A few of the more progressive states have secured the appointment to their penal boards of broadly educated people fully aware of the difficulty of the problem and of the necessity of calling upon all the resources of science for its solution. An improvement in the caliber of the

prison personnel and in the methods used has resulted. Guidance in this direction has been furnished by the well-organized penal system of the Federal government, a system developed for violators of Federal acts. Experiments are going forward with scientific classification of prisoners, their decentralization into small cottage groups, and their parole, on the basis of careful study of the individual case, to an officer who is not only qualified but has a small enough case load to exercise close supervision. Gradually we begin to approach in a few instances the standards of organization and administration that have long been demanded by close students of the problem.

The relation of the prisoners to the staff is different from that existing in any other type of group. There is the close contact of the family, without its natural sympathy; there is the need for tuition, without the opportunity for self-expression found in the school. The coercive power of the state is constantly in the foreground. It becomes apparent how salutary must be the forces at work in such a situation if they are to prove reformatory, how damaging they can be if they are merely restrictive and vengeful. For the most part the states have set up agencies with morally reformatory aims but have manned and equipped those agencies unintelligently. Not only have these agencies not had the desired influence, they have often had the contrary one of schooling their inmates to further crime.

The third type of governmental agency, the government corporation, is a relatively new development whose significance stems from its relation to the most baffling problem of our time. We have seen earlier the difficulty of keeping the capitalist enterprise in line with the moral standards of our society. But at the same time there can be no doubt of the general public desire to have the goods and services that can be most efficiently provided by large-scale organization. In a situation of this kind it is inevitable that recourse should be had to the govern-

ment, which is the only group under the control of the people that is powerful enough to cope with the problem. We may expect many experiments in the field of public control. One has been the regulation of certain businesses called "public utilities" by public commissions; another is the government corporation.

A government corporation is a halfway house between private ownership and operation and a government department or bureau. Although the details of the structure differ widely in the individual instances, the general purpose is to secure the responsibility to the public of the latter and the efficiency of operation of the former. This is aimed at by having the directing authority answerable only to the government for the conduct of the enterprise, but possessed of wide policy-making powers independent of normal "political" control. Usually the directors hold their offices for long terms and are removable only for cause. They do not have the same free hand as the private capitalist in administration, but their enterprises are much less constrained by governmental regulations than, say, the post office. Thus the government corporation attempts to secure the vision and continuous policy of a private corporation without the narrow self-seeking that the profit motive engenders.

In this country the government corporation with the largest record of achievement behind it is the Port of New York Authority. It has built and maintained bridges and tunnels as well as coordinated terminal facilities. Other examples are the Tennessee Valley Authority, The Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Home Owners Loan Corporation, and the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation. In the Federal corporations a majority of the stock is held by the United States, and no member of the governing board is elected privately. Some of the corporations are responsible to executive departments, others directly to the president. The fact that they are expected to be self-supporting and therefore not dependent

upon appropriations gives them freedom from the controls and restrictions applicable to all agencies on the Federal budget. Their semiautonomous position makes it possible to modify the sovereign immunity and render them subject to state taxation.

The fact that these government corporations are publicly owned does not mean that they avoid all the labor problems of the capitalist enterprise. If all the employees are put on a civil service basis there is the danger of stagnation and inefficiency, especially in the less responsible positions. If the management is as free to hire and fire as is that of a private corporation, the same split between employer and employee may develop. This split seems particularly unfortunate in a public enterprise in which all are presumably working together for the public good. The upshot is that government corporations usually adopt on "advanced" labor policy. The workers are encouraged to organize, and the standards of hours, pay, and working conditions are equal or superior to those of similar private undertakings.

Government corporations furnish an illustration of a principle that we will meet at several points—that the hierarchy of the working personnel of any kind of enterprise tends to become a center around which the whole revolves, so that the differences in ultimate control and in the relation to the public sink to minor significance. Although the term bureaucracy is usually employed to refer to this phenomenon only in government departments, it is equally applicable to the higher staff of these great semipublic corporations. Great enterprises demand an elaborate hierarchy. The hierarchy tends to become far removed from the source of ultimate control, whether public or private. If it is endowed with high ideals and a sense of responsibility, all is well. If it thinks first of its own selfish interests, the greater public interests are sacrificed. Perhaps the most troublesome question of our time is how to secure intelligent, responsible, and morally disciplined

administration of great undertakings. We may expect that experiments like government corporations, which seek to solve this problem on a new basis, will be continued, criticized, and refined.

Educational groups are the last to be considered. Separate treatment is not given to privately controlled educational units because these now constitute deviants from the normal type. Some of them are pure capitalist enterprises—the exploitative type of correspondence school for instance; some are more like benevolent groups—the endowed universities; some are appendages to struggle groups—labor colleges. But the great bulk of educational activity today goes forward under public auspices. Even endowed universities tend to be administered quite as much in the public interest as the state-supported ones and are therefore not so deviant as they appear.

The grounds for public control of education are too well known to require extended exposition. Modern life is so complex that systematic learning and training are necessary to a satisfactory participation in it. A democratic state cannot afford to take either of two risks: (1) that its citizens, in whose hands its destiny rests, will fail to obtain such learning and training, or (2) that education will be entrusted to persons who might take the opportunity to further their private ends.

So central and so fateful have we considered the educational function that we have been wary of handing it over to the ordinary state machinery. We wish it to be free of all taint of partisanship, to stand a little apart from the struggle of conflicting viewpoints. The best guarantee of this, we have thought, is to have the persons who control the schools selected for this purpose and no other. Hence the division of territory into school districts, separate from and paralleling the ordinary political units.

The educational structure is much simpler in rural areas than in cities, but the principles are the same. The school board elected by the people has the authority to select

the educational personnel and to exercise general supervision over the conduct of the schools, always subject to the provisions of state law. In the large city systems the responsibility naturally devolves in great part upon the superintendent of schools and his subordinates, the school principals. The children enter the schools in much the same role as the good-receivers of benevolent groups. Though they are the ones for whom the whole structure is erected, they have no voice in its control because of their immaturity. This does not mean, however, that they exercise no influence, for in the long run their needs and their interests affect the system through two channels: upward, within the school itself, through the teachers to the administrators; and indirectly, through their parents, in the latter's selection of, and pressure upon, the school board.

The broad ends that the schools are aimed to serve are clear enough, but when the attempt is made to reduce them to concrete objectives there is room for much difference of opinion. In general, the larger and more complex the system becomes, the more the leadership in fixing these objectives is taken by the professional staff. In a rural district the school board may not only select the single teacher but may determine, within the limits allowed by the state law, the content of the curriculum and even the methods of teaching. At the other extreme, a city system may have a special research department whose duty it is to carry out investigations into the effectiveness of teaching personnel, curricular offerings, and methods of instruction. In such a case the superintendent will digest for the board the findings and recommendations of the experts. The board can hardly be expected to do more than acquiesce in the policies suggested. Only in time of depression are the board members, responding to calls from the electorate for lower taxes, likely to play a more active role and insist on the elimination of "fads and frills" and the return to the simple ways of the "three

R's." Whatever success the board has, however, in altering the curricular policies of the professional staff is likely to endure only so long as the financial stringency, since close oversight can be maintained only with the constant vigilance that springs from public demand.

Another problem that arises is the class control of public schools, colleges, and universities. It has been frequently charged, and there is much evidence to support the charge, that the capitalist point of view has dominated our educational systems just as much as it has other aspects of government. One need not cite the extreme case of the southern mill town where the local mill owners hold all the local groups in the hollow of their hands. Different studies of the composition of school boards all show the same thing: "that our boards of education are predominantly made up of representatives from the upper and more privileged socio-economic groups in our social structure."[1] In four careful studies the average percentage of board members coming from the ranks of labor was found to be never more than 6 per cent.[2]

As a general rule the teachers are more broadly representative of the several classes of our society than are the board members. And the teachers' work brings them into much closer touch with conditions in the poorer classes. Hence their tendency to diverge from a capitalist point of view is natural, and a feeling of strain between them and the board is probable. The hunting out and dismissing of teachers thought to hold radical political or economic views is a not infrequent occurrence. In the colleges and universities this practice is considerably checked by the publicity which any such action is always given by the American Association of University Professors. At this level the milder but not much less effective measure of refusal of promotion is more commonly exercised.

[1] Harold C. Hand, "Who Runs Our School Boards," *American Teacher*, XXIII, No. 7 (April, 1939), p. 7.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

The general trend today is toward more professional organization among teachers and the development of a professional code that will make the group more independent of administrative control than it has been. To the degree that this independence is used to express a viewpoint of broad social responsibility and not mere self-interest it is bound to give teachers more real leadership in the educational process.

Educational units illustrate in clear fashion the institutional character of some governmental bodies. They exemplify forms of adjustment that have proven their worth over a long period and are therefore regarded as proper by all elements and sections of American society. The fact that some people send their children to private schools and universities and that whole groups like the Catholics have their own schools does not negate this statement. These persons recognize the need of universal education in a modern democratic state and realize that there do not exist adequate means of achieving this without public schools. Though they may for special reasons prefer to send their children to other schools, they believe that public ones are an essential means of realizing American values and ideals.

The teaching of the public schools seems rarely to develop more than a superficial loyalty to American institutions and values. The emphasis is largely upon acquiring knowledge and techniques that will be useful in later life, and useful is usually interpreted to mean merely conducive to individual happiness or prosperity. The chief exception is that definite attempts are made to develop respect for, and devotion to, the state. It is represented as the focus of national pride and of national democratic values. For the rest, respectful references are made to capitalism, the family, charities, and public education itself, but there is little evidence that these references affect much the attitudes of the children.

Indeed the school cannot stress common values much more than it does because the American people are afraid

of indoctrination. There is in the first place some disagreement as to the content of the American scheme of values, or at least as to which values should be most emphasized. This is particularly crucial with respect to values like self-reliance and humanitarianism. We believe in the exertion of individual effort and initiative and also in helping the unfortunate and the handicapped. Which one comes first? James Truslow Adams has put it thus:

> To clear the muddle in which our education is at present, we shall obviously have to define our values. Unless we can agree on what the values in life are, we clearly have no goal in education, and if we have no goal the discussion of methods is merely futile. Once the frontier stage is passed,—the acquisition of a bare living, and the setting up of a fair economic base,—the American dream itself opens up all sorts of questions as to values. It is easy to say a better and richer life for all men, but what *is* better and what *is* richer?[1]

Even if we can assume a general consensus on values and their relative importance, there is a second problem, that of interpreting events and conditions in the light of this value scheme. Here is opportunity for more disagreement. One person will see unfavorable aspects of capitalism and condemn it as a whole; another will see its favorable aspects and praise it. Such disagreements pose a difficult question of policy for the school. Some hold that there is so much room for personal bias that the school should stand scrupulously clear of evaluating at all. It should present the facts as they are without any positive or negative criticism. Others maintain that this means the virtual exclusion of all social science from the schools, saying that it is impossible to teach these subjects at a level below the university without imparting one's own evaluative interpretations.[2] Among those who believe

[1] *The Epic of America* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1932), p. 407.

[2] The possibility of teaching university students so as to show them the implications of different evaluative interpretations without inculcating any is, I think, incontrovertible. At this level it seems the best course. But it is extremely doubtful whether younger children have acquired sufficient powers of abstraction to make this feasible with them. An apposite article is:

that it is permissible for teachers to take positive positions there are two schools of thought: those who think that the traditionally dominant interpretations should be inculcated, and those who believe that the school is the place to begin a new society by reinterpreting the meaning of American values.[1] It is not the intention here to pass judgment on these different points of view, but only to bring the problem into sharp relief. A dynamic society requires that accepted values be reexamined and reinterpreted in the light of new conditions. What shall be the school's relation to this process? There is probably no "right" answer, and we may expect the question to be a source of contention so long as we have public schools in a changing society.

The school life itself, especially in the cities, is no more effective in developing common orientation than the teaching, for two reasons: the schoolroom group is not an intimate enough one to serve as a source of community experience generative of broad social ideals; and it does not bring together children from all social classes because each school draws from a neighborhood in which only those on a particular economic level live. The result is that the children obtain no opportunity to understand what the realization of common American values in the lives of all classes would really entail. These values therefore remain abstract, and the orientation to which they give rise is only superficially common.

Our general conclusion must be that the diversification of governmental units which is so marked a characteristic of our time is neither markedly integrative nor disintegrative. On the positive side one can cite the fact that some of these units do act as symbols of common orientation and do stimulate national feeling and loyalty to our frame

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Florian Znaniecki, "Education vs. Self-Education," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXXVI (November, 1930), pp. 371–386.

[1] See American Historical Association, *Report of the Commission on the Social Studies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934).

of government. On the other hand, the proposed establishment of new units and the conduct of those recently set up are subjects of bitter controversy. Moreover the notorious weaknesses and failings of our governmental system are probably accentuated by the rapid enlargement of the field of governmental activity, so that the confidence of the citizens and the discipline of the civil servants is to some extent undermined. The great potentialities for integration are not fulfilled. There is one grave danger. We may find ourselves with little common orientation in the political sphere except the sense of nationality; and that can easily degenerate into something narrowly selfish rather than broadly humanitarian. We may become ardent Americans but poor citizens of the world.

CHAPTER VII

BENEVOLENT GROUPS

Benevolent groups aim to do something constructive for those who are suffering from some hardship or incapacity. They are therefore made up principally of persons occupying two roles, the good-doers and the good-receivers. In this respect they are different from both struggle groups and the clubs, associations, and cooperatives that we shall consider later. Both of these others are largely self-interested, the former belligerently, the latter quietly.

Benevolent groups are by no means exclusively characteristic of our times, but they are certainly more diversified and far-reaching in their influence today than ever before. This can again be laid to the breakdown of the old community, where no special organization was needed for most such good work. Families looked after their own members so far as they could, and the community and church together looked after those families which were in desperate need. However, it must be emphasized that, side by side with the great development of industry and commerce that has reduced the old community to its vestigial state, has come an increased standard of living and more specialized means of medical and social care. These would make necessary special groups of some kind even though the old community still existed. We are not merely taking care of old responsibilities in a new way; we feel new responsibilities.

At the present stage of societal evolution there is much confusion in the allocation of these functions between private and public agencies. Particularly in this country has there been a great change since 1932 in the direction of more public administration. This has been obviously

a result of the inability of private organization to raise sufficient money through donations to cope with the human problems of the Great Depression. It is not clear as yet exactly what the division of responsibility is likely to be in the future, but the broad outlines begin to appear. In this chapter we consider only the private benevolent groups on the theory that, when services of the kind here considered are administered by public agencies, an important difference in their relation to societal structure appears.

The three great categories of people that seem to need the help that benevolent groups give are: the dependent ages, the physically and mentally incapacitated, and the poor. Stated obversely, people in the working ages, of sound mind and body, who have an adequate income, are not objects of concern to the benevolently minded. Since care of the dependent aged, when not assumed by the family, is now a responsibility of the state, the benevolent groups fall into the three following classes: (1) the so-called character-building groups for young people, (2) social agencies, and (3) hospitals and clinics.

The number of benevolent groups aiming to provide a fuller life for children seems to be constantly on the increase. The twentieth century is the century of the child. It has been remarked by several writers that for the first time in history children are developing their own culture, apart from the older generation, a culture that descends to the next generation of children without being mediated through adults. Though there is a degree of truth in this interpretation of the situation, it cannot be completely accepted. If it were to be, the inclusion of these children's organizations here under benevolent groups would be unjustifiable; they should have to have been discussed under clubs in Chap. X. Although we shall note that there are children's clubs and boys' gangs, most of the organizations that involve young people, like the Boy Scouts and the Y. W. C. A., are maintained only partly

by and under the control of the young themselves. In most of the types adults have a large "finger in the pie." And this is only natural, for children are hardly in a position to finance their own ventures, even though they might think themselves mature enough to control them.

The most nearly child-autonomous benevolent groups are those like the Boy Scouts and the Campfire Girls, which come in contact with adult values only in the person of a leader who is their guide and friend. Often he or she is comparatively young, so that an essentially youthful viewpoint is maintained throughout. The purpose of such groups is to interest children in healthful, interesting, and instructive pursuits, particularly those which will bring the participants closer to nature and at the same time develop in them an appreciation of the finer values of life. The theory is implicit that in severing the child from nature our modern urban life has cut him off from a source of pleasure, instruction, and inspiration. The week-end hikes, the teaching of handicrafts, and the summer camps are all calculated to reestablish this connection.

The scheme of organization of such groups is quite elastic, so that they may be sponsored by almost any kind of adult agency—a church, a school, or a luncheon club. They need not have any permanent "home," though they usually do. The uniform, the motto, the oath, and the ritual are aimed to impress youthful minds with the seriousness and the value of their membership and to inspire them to serve the community as well as to enjoy themselves.

It is difficult to form any judgment with respect to the degree of success of these groups in achieving their objectives. Certainly many city children are brought into closer touch with the nonurban world and its ways than they otherwise would be. How much effect this has on character and life-outlook is quite impossible to state. Hartshorne and May have come to rather pessimistic conclusions after painstaking research, but their techniques

were perhaps too narrowly focused to grasp broad influence on life values.[1]

Whatever the effect on their members, these organizations have shown themselves unable to reach those elements of the youthful population most in need of efforts to improve standards of value—the children of the slum areas who form gangs. Boy Scout troops are almost certain to be shunned by such children and ridiculed as "sissy." To meet this situation another movement has gained much headway of recent years—that of Boys' Clubs. These are now joined in the Boys' Club Federation of America. The object of this organization is to go into areas of high juvenile delinquency and establish a character-building program that will prove attractive to, and effective with, the boys of these areas. A neighborhood center is usually established at which many of the activities of the club can be carried on. The main emphasis is on healthful recreation under competent leadership. An attempt is made to interest a large number of responsible citizens of the local community in the enterprise, not only for the sake of their pecuniary assistance, but also to bring about mutual understanding between the boys and the citizens. The latter need particularly to become acquainted with the life conditions under which these underprivileged children live.

The Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. are older than the boys' club movement, but their purposes are not dissimilar. Growing up in a time of great influx of young people to cities for employment, they aimed to help them meet the personal problems of adjustment to urban life. Especially was the purpose to ward off the evil influence of the saloon, the billiard parlor, and the cheap rooming house. Provisions were made for sociable contacts under religious auspices and, although these organizations under-

[1] Hugh Hartshorne and Mark A. May, *Studies in Deceit* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928), pp. 362–367; *Studies in Service and Self-control* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), pp. 225–228, 421–425.

took in various places such diverse activities as the setting up of rooming houses and employment bureaus and the development of recreational programs, there was the common quality of a strong evangelical enthusiasm running through them all. With the passage of the years the movements have grown in size and wealth, and the physical structure of their plants has come to dominate their organization. The consequence of this increasing secularization is that many of their members now look upon these groups as little more than downtown clubs.

From the earliest days the sponsors encouraged the young members to look upon themselves not merely as recipients of, and participants in, a better life, but as missionaries seeking to improve the conditions of life about them. The young men and women were to carry the good work out into the community. To a considerable extent this aim was achieved, and members of the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. were to be found working with social settlements, organizing classes for illiterate immigrants, conducting religious services, and distributing flowers, fruit, and clothing in prisons and soldiers' homes.[1] However, this aspect of their activities has survived more generally in the college and university associations than in those of the cities. The rise of specialized charitable organizations in the urban areas, coupled with the general decline in religious enthusiasm among young people, has brought it about that only a few particularly idealistic students in our institutions of higher education carry on the social work tradition.

The direction of an urban Y. M. C. A. or Y. W. C. A. is in the hand of a board which is made up of benevolently minded citizens of the community. The board is self-perpetuating, so that there is no pretense of self-control by the young people for whom the group exists. The

[1] I am indebted to Mary S. Sims, *The Natural History of a Social Institution—the Y. W. C. A.* (New York, 1936), for much information on these movements.

latter, however, usually elect representatives to a central body which submits proposals concerning the activities of the organization to the board. The income from membership fees is never sufficient to support the work of the organization, and the difference must be made up by private subscriptions either through a Community Fund or directly.

The professional staff has gradually become the stabilizing element in these groups very much as has the management personnel in the quasi-public corporation and the hired staff in the downtown club. The "secretaries," as they are called, are trained by the respective national organizations. These central bodies also act as clearing houses for programs and policies, issue national publications, and arrange the national conventions. Though in theory strongly decentralized, these two movements actually give great power to their central organizations. There is more national integration than is usually possessed by a federation. Local associations are frequently criticized by their communities for too strict adherence to nationally defined policies.[1]

The activities of local associations are multifarious. We shall have to content ourselves with a mere enumeration of some of the more frequent ones: the provision of rooms for transient young people and of all kinds of athletic facilities (gymnasiums, handball and squash courts, swimming pools, and so forth), evening classes of a vocational as well as a general nature, religious services and instruction, clubs based on hobbies or vocations, employment bureaus, cafeterias, and reading rooms.

The importance of the physical fact of the building in all these activities cannot be overstated. The most thorough study of either of these movements that we have says:

> Next to emphasis on the development of the trained professional secretary it appears that no one factor helped more to stabilize the movement as a whole than did the erection of Young Women's Christian Association buildings in all the larger cities and many of the smaller

[1] Sims, *op. cit.*, pp. 166–167.

ones of this country. Association buildings date back much earlier, but it was not until the organization of the present national movement that there was a widespread idea that in any city of appreciable size the Young Women's Christian Association should have its own building and, if possible, a building erected for its particular purposes.[1]

It is obvious from what has been said that the danger for these groups from their own viewpoint is that they will lose that special value which differentiates them from a mere club. The secretaries must constantly keep the organization aware of the marginal groups in the community—the Negroes, the immigrants, the factory girls. The tendency is to gravitate toward homogeneity, placidity, and self-enjoyment, whereas the objectives of the enterprise are heterogeneity within the Christian tradition, missionary zeal, and self-sacrifice.

Summer camps for boys and girls are a relatively recent development that has attained enormous proportions. There is no justification for treating all the types of camps together except that of expediency, for some are pure capitalist enterprises, some are pure charities, and there are all gradations between. The dissimilarity in function, however, is not so great as the dissimilarity in structure would lead one to expect. Even the camp that is most purely capitalistic in motivation possesses an everyday life marked by kindly interest and good fellowship because of the close, intimate association of the camp staff with the children. Perhaps we shall not distort reality too much, then, if we treat them all as a type of benevolent group.

Camps are a special product of our contemporary social order. It is city children who go or are sent to camp, and for the reason that their normal environment does not afford them opportunities for recreation in contact with nature. There may be plenty of playgrounds and gymnasiums, but there is not the access to wood, lake, and stream in their unspoiled loveliness which so many city adults feel is re-creational in the true sense of the word.

[1] Sims, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

Hence not only the children of the rich find their way to expensive private camps, but camps are established by public-spirited groups for the children of the slums.

So great has become the belief in the character-building possibilities of the summer camp that there are attempts being made to use them in the fight against juvenile delinquency. In some places special efforts are being exerted to discover the problem children, the probable future delinquents, and see to it that they have the opportunity to go to camp. The difficulties that such a program entails for the camp administrators and counselors and the possible dangers to other children are thought to be more than offset by the benefits to the predelinquents themselves.

One must acknowledge that not all well-to-do parents are thinking only of their children's welfare when they send them to camp. Not infrequently there is a selfish factor involved, that of avoiding responsibility for the care of the children during the summertime. A camp can be a very convenient way to obtain freedom to pursue one's own interests and pleasures.

Camps vary considerably in their programs, some having a strict daily routine, others allowing a large measure of freedom in the activities followed. In all there is a staff of counselors who have immediate oversight of the work and play, under the general supervision of a director. Usually a counselor is attached to a particular group of boys or girls and becomes their friend and leader. The group with which he works ordinarily lives together in one or more tents or cabins and thus has the opportunity to become what sociologists call a "primary group" within the larger whole of the camp. The members play together, perform their common tasks on some complementary basis, and in general learn how to live in a cooperative and integrated way. It is this experience in community living which, taken together with the healthful recreational opportunities, is thought to be so valuable in training the

citizens of tomorrow. In some degree there is a return to the sociologically more "natural" conditions of rural community life. There is a turning away from the anonymity and impersonality of the urban metropolis to the life of our forefathers.

A particularly interesting type of group from a sociological point of view is the Parent-Teacher Association. It is different from the other benevolent groups we have studied in that the individuals for whom it exists, the children, are not a part of it. Two other sets of people come together in their interest, but they are left out.

Parent-Teacher Associations reveal two deep-running characteristics of contemporary American life. First, that they are thought to be necessary at all reveals the depth of the clefts in our social structure. In a small community they are unnecessary because the adults already know the public school teacher. She has usually grown up in the village and feels quite at home with everybody. Second, these associations show our deep concern for the welfare of the child. We have become aware of the drifting apart of school and home, of the consequent strain of diverse points of view on children, and we are interested in doing something to remedy the situation. That the results may in many cases be trivial does not in any way render these groups less significant as signs of the character of American society. What fails to develop from the natural forces of a true community life we attempt to foster by rational organizations.

Parent-Teacher Associations are mainly interested in bringing about understanding between teachers and parents with respect to the problems of child development. The teachers explain what the school is trying to do so that the parents may cooperate intelligently, and the latter in turn express their attitudes concerning the program and policies of the school. Their activities are not always, however, confined to such discussion meetings. Frequently the P. T. A. enters the political arena in behalf of the needs

of the schools. Often they sponsor exhibitions and programs through which the work of the schools may be shown to the community. In short, they undertake whatever is feasible for the strengthening and improvement of the work of the schools.

It will be noted that we have not treated endowed schools, colleges, and universities, though they are properly benevolent groups of the class we have been considering. Our plea must again be one of expediency. These educational units do not seem to be different enough from publicly supported ones, which we have discussed in the last chapter, to warrant separate treatment. The reader can perhaps interpret their situation by putting together our analysis of benevolent groups here with that of public educational groups there.

The five types of character-building groups we have considered—Boy Scouts and the like, Boys' Clubs, Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., summer camps, and P. T. A.'s—are all devoted to the development of good citizens, but none is fully institutional in the sense that it represents the way of meeting a certain need which is recognized by all social classes as most expressive of common values. Most persons regard all of them as worth while, as conducive to the "good society," but they have the shortcoming from an institutional point of view that they are to a certain extent alternatives. Each one does not have a definite sphere within which it is the accepted method of character building. Perhaps we can say that *the* character-building agency, a more abstract cultural form than any of the types we have considered, is a true institution in American society.

In view of the character-building aim of these groups one would suppose that they tend to produce common orientation. Character would seem to imply conduct consonant with the mores. Though it would probably be cynical to deny them any effectiveness in this direction, their achievement appears to be comparatively meager.

Two conditions are perhaps responsible. In the first place the influence of these groups upon participants is either periodic or brief. The Scouts, the Y. M. C. A., or a Boys' Club only reach any one boy a few hours a week, whereas a summer camp lasts not more than eight weeks. In the time at their disposal they no doubt stimulate patriotic sentiment, respect for family life, and a willingness to help others; but there are so many other influences at work in the lives of young people, many of them disintegrative in tendency, that these character-building agencies can hardly expect to accomplish much. The second reason is that children from different social classes are rarely brought together in them. The ideals that are inculcated receive some practical expression in the activities of such groups, but the most crucial experience of all—that of seeing to it that members of other social classes enjoy the qualities of life which all feel are desirable—is rarely had. Such an experience would indeed be integrative.

Social agencies are the groups that minister to the poor or those temporarily suffering from catastrophe. Among such agencies are social settlements, family welfare bureaus, children's aid societies, day nurseries, privately supported orphanages, and the chapters of the American Red Cross. That they do in reality constitute a somewhat homogeneous class of organization is shown by the fact that they frequently unite in a Council of Social Agencies for better coordination of their work.

One need not labor the point that such agencies also are particularly characteristic of our day and age. They spring from a crying need and represent a typical social attitude. The need is created by the breakdown of the older community ties and the resulting helplessness of those who in an earlier day would have been helped by relatives and neighbors. The social attitude is compounded of a humane desire to prevent suffering and an unwillingness to go to the roots of the matter by understanding and eliminat-

ing the conditions that give rise to that suffering. We meet a crying need by taking those remedial measures which constitute the line of least resistance, not stopping to discover whether they constitute the line of most intelligence.

Some social agencies, like settlements and day nurseries, serve a restricted geographical area. They are usually located where the need is greatest, that is, in the slums populated by immigrants or Negroes. These marginal elements occupy the lowest rungs on the economic ladder and are the first pushed off by unemployment. The immigrants have the further handicap of lack of acquaintance with American ways of life so that the rearing of their children by the family needs to be supplemented by the services of the social agencies.

The functions of day nurseries are so obvious that they need not detain us. Mothers who must work are often without relatives or friends with whom they can leave their children. The day nursery meets the need. Of recent years it has more and more ceased to be a mere place of deposit where children are checked, as it were, during working hours, and has taken on more and more the aspect of a nursery school. Personnel and equipment are provided to make the experience stimulating as well as healthful for the child.

Social settlements are a less simple expression of a desire to help the inhabitants of a neighborhood. The first settlement was Toynbee Hall in London, which was founded in 1884. The idea behind it was for educated and humane persons to take up their residence in the settlement, and, by sharing the life of the surrounding slum, to understand the people and help raise them to a finer level of life, not only economically but spiritually. This ideal struck a responsive chord in an America whose cities contained immigrant slum neighborhoods, and many social settlements were established here. Hull House in Chicago was the first and, because of the great work of Jane Addams

there, remains the most famous. As in the case of all social agencies, a strong tendency toward professionalization has been present in recent decades. Volunteer workers, such as university students, who were originally the mainstay of the settlements, have now assumed a quite secondary position.

The role-structure of a settlement is much like that of any other benevolent group. There is a board of directors which is in fact, if not always in theory, self-perpetuating, and this board selects an executive who hires a staff. Most of the work is done by the paid personnel, with such help as they can get from volunteers. The policies are set by the board on the advice of, and probably largely under the influence of, the executive director.

The primary function of a social settlement remains what it has always been, the enrichment of the social life of the neighborhood. This is attempted in a great many ways. In the nature of the case, the work lies mostly with the women and children. The former are brought into the settlement through classes and clubs of all kinds. For the latter, cultural opportunities and recreational facilities are particularly important. Some settlements, like Hull House, have an elaborate physical plant in which a variety of activities are going forward at all hours of the day. Unlike case-working agencies, settlements tend to employ unspecialized, though still professional, workers who can not only diagnose a family's troubles but can teach a sewing class, show the children how to play games, lend a hand with nursing if necessary, and otherwise be all-round ministers to the needy.

An activity, which settlements performed in the early days but which has now largely been given over to universities and other scientific organizations, is research. The original Booth Survey of London, a monumental piece of social research, grew out of work at Toynbee Hall.[1]

[1] *Life and Labour of the People of London* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1892–97), 17 volumes.

The relation of the social settlement to its neighborhood is a delicate one. It is most important that the settlement workers should not take a condescending attitude toward those whom they are trying to help. Sometimes neighborhood leaders are appointed by the board of directors to sit with it in order to forestall this criticism. Another difficulty arises from the mobility of our city population, for settlements not infrequently find that a program that has been successful with a particular immigrant group is no longer appropriate to the situation because that group has left the neighborhood and has been succeeded by another. Or should the succession not be complete, there is the problem of getting the two nationalities to work harmoniously together. The dependence of the success of the settlement upon the degree to which the neighborhood population feels it is *theirs* can hardly be overemphasized. This constitutes a great difference from case-working agencies, which necessarily have a more distant and impersonal relationship with those whom they are helping. Their very use of the word "client" shows this.

It is possible that the social settlement will be of diminishing importance as the foreign-born population shrinks. It is an especially successful agency in dealing with the problems of newly arrived immigrants settled in homogeneous neighborhoods. With the Americanization of these immigrants and their dispersion into other areas it may be that there will not be the need of, or gratitude for, settlements. Particularly may this be true if social-center work organized through the schools comes into competition with them.

The only other class of social agencies that will be considered is the so-called case-working agency. This entails the omission of orphanages and the chapters of the American Red Cross. Perhaps these omissions can be justified on the grounds: that orphanages are generally frowned upon today as a method of solving a dependency problem and are vanishing before the advance of foster-home place-

ment; and that the local chapters of the American Red Cross adapt themselves so differently to the varying needs of different communities as to defy unified separate treatment.

Case-working agencies are for the most part family welfare organizations, though there are also more specialized types such as children's aid societies. Here our conception of a group is difficult to apply because the "clients" are neither members of an association as in the Y. M. C. A., residents of a neighborhood as with the social settlements, nor participants in a common enterprise as are the workers in a factory. Yet it seems wrong to leave them on the outside altogether as we do with the customers of a store. Theirs is not a relation of mere pecuniary exchange. It seems best to regard them as part of the group, though admittedly marginal, so long as they are being served.

Case-working agencies usually serve the whole local community, though certain religious groups, particularly the Catholics and the Jews, frequently have their own separate organizations. This differentiation makes little difference, however, so far as the work carried on is concerned, for all employ similar techniques.

The organization of a case-working agency has the familiar pattern that we have come to associate with benevolent groups—a board drawn from the community, a director, and a staff. The staff in most agencies today is professionally trained, and the heart of the enterprise is in the relation of the case worker to the client. There is considerable standardization of practice in this relation because of the national organization of social workers on the one hand and of the agencies themselves on the other. The case worker, if it is a family agency, takes a complete family history, studies the family situation carefully, and draws up a plan of procedure to help the family out of its difficulties. These may be matters of physical health, of sociopsychological adjustment, of economic insufficiency, or any combination of them. Arrangements

are made for whatever treatment of physical ills is required, diets are recommended, new family patterns of adjustment are suggested, and want is alleviated. In short, the social worker is both a diagnostician of, and a physician for, family troubles.

Like social settlements, case-working agencies frequently receive help from volunteers. Their services are generally auxiliary in character, such as taking children to clinics, doing clerical work, and securing publicity for the agency's activities.

The encroachment, since the onset of the Great Depression, of public agencies upon the territory formerly occupied exclusively by private ones has produced somewhat of a crisis for the latter. The tendency has been for pure relief to be provided by the government, leaving for the private agencies all the more complicated problems. However, there have been two difficulties: first, public agencies, once having established contact with a family to give relief, have often gone ahead to provide other sorts of aid; and, second, it has been hard for private agencies to raise their budgets through donations, both because many donors have been forced to reduce their contributions, and because many people have been unable to understand the need for private agencies after public relief was established. The reaction of private agencies to the situation has been in general that of any organization that believes it has a valuable function and finds itself threatened—to fight for self-preservation. The danger is of course that the fight will be made on the basis of a traditional conception of function rather than on the basis of a conception that the changed situation calls for. In short, these agencies may leave themselves open to the charge of treating their organizations as ends in themselves rather than as means to societal welfare.

Social agencies are marked by the importance of the relation between the staff and the recipients of benevolence. The sponsors rarely come in direct contact with the recip-

ients of their beneficence, particularly if the organization is large. In fact most of these organizations have a type of membership which consists solely in the subscription of money. It is obvious that such membership can include a far more diversified group than could ever come together with mutual satisfaction in a voluntary association like a luncheon club. On the other hand, most social agencies feel that they must bring their contributors to some knowledge of the group's activities so that their interest may be kept alive. Hence many of these groups make great publicity efforts and attempt to have their money members participate in some way in the selection of the board of directors.

So strong is the tendency for the professional staff to become the hub of the organization that the board of directors often plays more of an advisory than a directive role. Since board members contribute their time without remuneration, they are not likely to have the same degree of contact with the problems of the enterprise as the salaried personnel. It is therefore quite natural for the former to entrust the latter with responsibility for many decisions. This tendency is not lessened by the circumstance that board members are frequently chosen for their prominence in other lines of effort. They are likely to be busy persons who cannot devote much time to a benevolent group. Also, in many communities, considerable prestige attaches to such board membership. Some of those who consent to serve have one eye on their own social status.

It is interesting that loyalties to both character-building groups and social agencies are affected by such seemingly irrelevant considerations as area covered and size. Miss Coyle writes:

> It was discovered, for example, in the course of organizing a social agency in the middle West, that in states with a strong state loyalty, associations gained by organizing on a state basis, although the area was functionally entirely irrelevant. The morale connotations of a state attachment carried over into the devotion to the organization.

. . . In a somewhat similar way the prestige value of large areas makes it desirable to organize certain groups on a national or international basis, even though there may be no relation between its functions and the area itself. The preference for large spaces and long distances so characteristic of our particular milieu adds distinct value to a large territorial base. Within federated organizations the same habits act to give prestige to national actions and national officers regardless of their intrinsic merit, or even of the power which such position may bestow.[1]

This quotation brings out clearly one of the reasons for the penchant of such groups to form national organizations. They need "money members," and these can be more easily interested if the group is a part of a broad, well-known movement. Other advantages of such federations are the exchange of experience and the setting of professional standards. However, in such broad-scale organization, the central body cannot be too dominating. Its powers are merely delegated upward by the local units. If it takes positive stands on issues without the practically unanimous support of all member groups, it runs the risk of secession. Thus it must remain chiefly consultative and advisory in function.

The dominance of the professional staff in social agencies raises dangerous possibilities in the way of bureaucracy. One of these is that the organization will become formal, will get into ruts of practice that cease adequately to meet the needs of the changing world. Where there is a strong professional spirit kept active by national professional associations, as in the fields of many social agencies, this danger is likely to be avoided. As a matter of fact, here there is often the opposite problem: How can the professional staff go ahead with new practices without shocking the contributors and thus cutting down support? This means that the lay public is more traditionally minded than the trained personnel and that the former either have to be educated by the latter to a new point of view or be kept in ignorance of what is actually being done. It is said

[1] Grace L. Coyle, *Social Process in Organized Groups* (New York, 1930), pp. 86–87.

that the latter course is not infrequently the one actually adopted.

If the professional staff is not likely to illustrate formalism in its methods of procedure, it may illustrate something very like it in its attitude toward the organization as a whole. The staff members are efficient, but at the same time they may wish to preserve their jobs. And if a broader social efficiency might mean the elimination of their jobs or of their organizations, they are likely to fight the change. In short, the feeling of a vested interest in the position will not down, even with the personnel of benevolent groups.

Despite such weaknesses the social agency appears to have won a secure place in the American scheme of life. Perhaps no particular type of agency is approved by all, but something in the way of privately organized charity is generally believed in. We recognize that common values are threatened by the decline of the "natural" community, and we find in the social agency a new instrument for expressing these values. This does not mean that charitable organizations are so strongly integrative as to offset the divisive influences of large-scale capitalism. They have only the function of picking up the pieces. They do not prevent the breakage. And the whole that they put back together is not so strong and sound as the original article. Thus the social agency is in its very essence negative. It is a deficiency institution. One feels that in a well-ordered society it would be unnecessary, or at least that its role would be greatly reduced. We cannot imagine the social agency as the creator of the good life in the same way that the family, the school, the state, or the church might be such a creator. Like certain insects it fulfills its highest destiny only in the act of dying, for the values that it strives to realize would, if really effective, create a society having little need for social agencies.

In trying to determine whether social agencies develop a concern for the common welfare in their participants we

must consider the three different classes of persons involved: the sponsors, the active workers, and the good-receivers.

The sponsors who merely give money to the agency either directly or indirectly through a Community Fund are probably affected very little by their act. They are usually well-intentioned persons who know little about the work being done but who feel vaguely that they are doing their humanitarian duty in supporting it. Sometimes the Community Fund drive takes on a compulsive character that ill befits the values being served and probably hinders the further development of such values. In any event, money givers participate at such a distance that the group has little power to shape their orientation. Not so the members of the agencies' boards and volunteer workers. Although the former may be thinking of prestige in "society" when they accept such positions, they usually find that close contact with crying human needs awakens their humanitarian impulses. Many well-to-do persons are stimulated for the first time to a critical examination of the existing order by their contacts, as members of charity boards or volunteer workers, with the seamy side of American life. These people may become the leaders in creating more of a moral community in the future. If they do, however, they will probably not incorporate their reforms in the social agency but in the government, the capitalist enterprise, or the school. These latter are much more suitable than the social agency for changing basic relations in our societal structure.

The effect upon the members of the professional staff is not likely to be so great because they are usually strongly humanitarian to start with. Many case workers are young women who have entered the profession with an idealistic enthusiasm gained through church or college contacts. Their experiences on the job are quite as likely to dull as to heighten their humanitarianism. Although some of them progress to a more deep-seated appreciation of the necessity of all classes striving together if common values are

to be realized, others become timeservers who think mainly of the vested interest in their jobs.

The good-receivers or clients of social agencies are so heterogeneous that almost nothing can be said about the effect upon them of their relationship to the agency. Most of them probably regard it as a sort of service station where minimum human wants are provided for. Their contacts are almost exclusively with the professional staff, not the sponsors. It is doubtful, therefore, if many achieve more understanding of the economically privileged classes. They are so oppressed by their own difficulties and, except for the social settlements, the relations with the agency are so impersonal that not much is accomplished in the direction of common orientation.

Thus the growth of social agencies may be interpreted as a resultant of a tendency toward societal disintegration. Sensitive persons see the danger and set up instrumentalities to combat it. The general acceptance and support of these organizations indicate strong humanitarian impulses in our people, but the necessary machinery becomes so cumbersome that it does little to vitalize and heighten those impulses.

The subsumption of hospitals, sanitoriums, and clinics under the head of benevolent groups is paradoxical in the sense that the only ones that are completely benevolent, the publicly controlled ones, are theoretically included in our last chapter on governmental units. The resolution of this paradox is simply that the great majority of large hospitals and clinics that are not publicly controlled are endowed and administered by private associations in much the same way as social agencies. Though they charge for their services, they do not expect that the patients will defray the whole cost of the undertaking, including depreciation on the property, through the payment of charges.

Though only 45 per cent of all hospitals and 25 per cent of all hospital beds were, in 1938, in the hands of such

benevolent groups,[1] we are going to treat the whole matter of health organizations in this chapter. We do this on the theory that the type of service rendered by hospitals and clinics is so vitally human and has become so professional that the method of ultimate control has little practical significance in the operation of the unit. The 27 per cent of all hospitals which are owned by individuals and partnerships, and in which are 5 per cent of all beds, are operated for the most part by doctors for their own patients. They are therefore hardly to be compared with ordinary capitalist enterprises. And the government-controlled ones, representing 28 per cent of all hospitals and 70 per cent of all beds, are much the same as those operated by the benevolent groups. Whatever additional features there are have been covered in our discussion of governmental agencies.

The state hospitals are the most important type among those publicly controlled. These are devoted almost exclusively to the care of illnesses that require prolonged confinement—nervous and mental diseases, tuberculosis, and blindness. Most families cannot bear the expense of such protracted hospitalization. The hospitals that are operated by the benevolent groups are largely of the general type and take care chiefly of shorter illnesses and operative cases.

The structure of the hospital group has the same sort of dual character that we find in the Y. M. C. A., the social settlement, and the school. On the one side is the professional personnel, arranged in a hierarchy with a director at the top, who is responsible, except in the individually owned hospital, to a board of directors. On the other side are the patients. These must be regarded as belonging to the group because they are not only buying a commodity, health, but are also participating in a form of social life. They establish relations with the staff and with each other which are very different from the purely business relation which a purchaser bears to a capitalist enterprise.

[1] These and succeeding figures are taken from the annual census of hospitals reported in *American Medical Association Journal*, CXII (Mar. 11, 1939), p. 910.

A clinic is a group similar to a hospital except that the patients are ambulatory. Many clinics are in reality the out-patient departments of hospitals, but the majority are independent. The chief types have to do with infant and maternal care, tuberculosis, venereal disease, and nervous and mental disease. Again we see that social organization is necessarily adapted to the nature of the physical condition or ailment, since none of those named incapacitates its bearers to the extent that they are unable to come and go. Originally clinics were only for the indigent who could not afford to patronize a physician, but more and more they are becoming available to paying patients because of the increasing use of *X* ray and other laboratory equipment which the individual physician cannot afford to provide. In this field also, the government is coming more and more to the fore, and the role of the benevolent groups is relatively, though not absolutely, diminishing. The best known national associations that have helped to foster local clinics under benevolent group control are the National Tuberculosis Association and the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

The clinic is different from the hospital in that the patients do not form so integral a part of the group. It is of little practical importance whether we regard them as outside, like the purchasers from a store, or inside, like the hospital patients, but it is interesting to note that the clinic represents more nearly than any other social form the critical limit of our concept of a group. In terms of our definition one would have to discover whether in fact the patients feel themselves part of the clinic's system or not before one could decide whether they belong to the group.

There can be little doubt that the hospital and the clinic have an institutional character in modern American life. They meet a most fundamental need in a manner expressive of the humanitarian values of our culture. The values thus implemented are perhaps as universally held as any we have, and there seems little disagreement relative to the mode of satisfying them. In short, the hospital and

the clinic are expressive of an element of community as broad as American society itself.

Hospitals and clinics are quite as potent in vitalizing common values as social agencies. Especially is the professional staff likely to have a keen sense of those qualities of life, which, by American standards, all classes should enjoy in common. The privation and suffering, which are visible, almost palpable, to the doctors, nurses, and orderlies, cannot but effect their life orientation. The seeming coldness they sometimes exhibit is probably only a protective device to keep them from emotional exhaustion. As for the patients, they too are probably drawn closer to their fellow men by their contacts with other sufferers and with kindly staff members. A hospital is perhaps the most humane of all organizations which bring together all elements of our population.

Apart from particular types of benevolent groups, which, we have seen, exemplify institutions in our culture, it would seem that there is a broad, abstract pattern of *the* benevolent group, which is institutional too. All classes appear to agree that there is a need for helping certain ages and categories of our population, if our humanitarian values are to be realized, and that the benevolent group is the proper way to do so. The situation is similar to that of the capitalist enterprise. There the belief in private initiative and effort was the ultimate value that produced the institutional element; so here it is the belief in voluntary efforts in remedying insufficiencies and alleviating suffering. Though the state may progressively take over more and more of the activities in this field, it will do so successfully only to the degree that the people come to regard the state as a benevolent rather than as a merely coercive organization. Whether private or public, so long as we continue to support ameliorating programs for those who need help in our society, and so long as the organization keeps from becoming wholly impersonal and mechanical, we shall have an integrative force of some importance.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FAMILY

Among our seven types of group, the family is both the oldest and the most fundamental in societal structure.[1] It is the primary group par excellence. If it proves not to be a firm rock in the midst of the flood of societal change, then we can expect nothing else to promote stability. In the fortunes of the contemporary American family we see the age-old principles of simple human association struggling with the effects of the individualizing forces we have mentioned so often. It is perhaps in this struggle that our whole societal destiny is being hammered out. However different our notions may be as to what form the family should assume, we can agree upon the importance of the evolutionary process here taking place.

The family in American society can hardly be treated as a single phenomenon. There is too much variety in its manifestations. But it is very difficult to reduce this variety to clear-cut types. To a considerable extent there are not only class, but regional, and even religious differentiations in evidence. And these all cut across one another. Any simple categorization is bound to give a false impression unless it is realized that the types are "ideal" in the sense that they represent only the forms that *tend* to be called into being by particular broad concatena-

[1] "The simplest concrete form of human life is the primary group, always including physical generation and nurture, language, a culture or social heritage and a human or group nature in self-assertive individuals. Out of this spring arts, religions, systems of government and other specialized forms of culture. How and whence? We do not know except that the beginnings of these things seem to be part of the primary complex, and that the beginnings develop variously in different cases." Charles Horton Cooley, Unpublished Journals, XXIII, pp. 88–89 (Mar. 25, 1928).

tions of circumstances. Actual families shade gradually from one type to another, and it may be hard to find any that are pure exemplifications.

For our purposes it seems best to recognize only two family types, the rural and the urban. The basic criterion for the distinction is not that of actual residence in the country or in town, but whether or not the family has the character of a productive as well as a consuming economic unit. This criterion has been chosen because it is so influential throughout the whole range of family living that many other characteristics vary concomitantly with it. Professor Roy H. Holmes has shown that the nature of the relationships between farm parents and their children, the attitudes toward town people and the use made of town services, and the goals for which farm people strive all stem from the nature of family unit itself, with its strong economic interdependence, its self-direction as a productive unit, and its comparative isolation.[1] Indeed, so important are the derivative effects that we would be inclined to class as rural a family recently transplanted from farm to city. Though cooperation in production will have ceased, the members will still be carrying the attitudes and points of view that derive from such production, and these will determine for the present the nature of the family unit. In the last analysis, then, our classification is in terms of habits and attitudes stemming from the group's relation to economic production.

The rural family is much nearer to the family group of earlier times than is its analogue. This is in part due to the fact that the influences that have given modern life its peculiar character have largely originated in the city and in part, as Holmes has clearly pointed out, to the fact that the nature of the productive process on the farm throws up real barriers to the penetration of those aspects of urban culture that involve changes in family relations.[2] These

[1] Unpublished manuscript.
[2] *Ibid.*

barriers last, however, only so long as the farm remains a family enterprise. When agriculture is carried on either by large corporations or in communist collective farms the resistance to city influences breaks down. We may say then that the rural family is likely to remain a type distinct from the urban one so long as agriculture remains dominantly a matter of small holdings operated by families.

The rural family is at once a biosocial group and an economically productive unit. It is both a true community and a business enterprise. This was not an unusual combination in ages past, indeed it was the almost universal case, but the forces of the last two centuries have tended to split the partnership. Today we usually think of the two elements as standing at opposite poles, the one representing a rich sharing of values, the other a highly rational impersonality of pure efficiency. It is the interplay of these two elements in the rural family that gives rise to its peculiar problems and lends to it a great significance in contemporary life.

The physical situation of the farm family has much to do with its distinctive character. In the first place, it is isolated. The family members are thrown together and on their own resources just because their neighbors live at a distance. City influences would certainly have penetrated further in America if the farmers lived in villages as they do in many parts of Europe. Second, the home and the place of work are physically united. They form one piece of real estate. The two worlds of business and family relations are inextricably intermingled. These are completely separated for city men, with the possible exception of small shopkeepers whose families live over their stores and doctors whose offices are in their houses. But even these keep separate accounts for their businesses and their households, whereas in the rural family all is likely to be administered together. And no city family can secure such a complete merging of the two elements as those farm families the members of which not only love each other but

love their common workplace. W. I. Thomas has said of the Polish peasant, "If the primary group is distinguished by face-to-face and sentimental relations I think it is correct to say that the land of the peasant was included in his group."[1]

Another way of pointing this out is to state that the farm family is not separated from the technical means of the production which earns its livelihood. This is not a matter of ownership, but of possession at home. The city man may own his factory lock, stock, and barrel; but still he has to leave home to work in it, and his children may know little or nothing about it. The farmer, on the other hand, may be only a poor tenant who has lost all hope of ownership; yet he possesses in and around his home his means of livelihood, and his family cannot help but understand and share his problems.

The participation of the wife and children does not stop, however, with mere appreciation; they work. The duties of a farm wife are well known to be onerous. Few city-bred women can make a successful adjustment as farmers' wives simply because they have not been trained to the long hours of work and the responsibility that are the lot of farm women. And it is the same with the children. From their youngest days they are accustomed to help with the chores, and, as they grow older, to take a correspondingly greater part in the work of the farm. There is no denying that friction frequently arises between parents and children on this score, especially if the children are attending village high schools. The village children can play after school hours, and their farm classmates find it hard when they are expected to return home to help with the work. This is one of the points at which the two family types come in contact, and the farm family experiences strain because of the greater responsibility for the welfare of the whole which it requires of its members.

[1] "The Prussian-Polish Situation: An Experiment in Assimilation," *American Journal of Sociology*, XIX (March, 1914), p. 632.

The rural family is closer to the traditional family type not only because of its more numerous functions and its spatial situation, but also by reason of its great emphasis upon family tradition and continuity. Partly because of their lesser mobility, partly because of their lack of contact with the individualistic, speculative life of the cities, partly because of their love for the land itself, most farm parents hope that one of their sons will carry on with the family farm. Farming to them is not merely an occupation, it is a way of life in which they wish their descendants to continue. Needless to say, this also makes for strained relations between parents and children if the latter have become fascinated by that other world of city lights, business "opportunities," and short working hours.

The rural family, then, has a more all-round life than its city counterpart. It is a more complete community in the sense that within it almost all aspects of its members' lives find expression. It has, however, the defects of its virtues. In a world that has become individualistic and conventional as against communal and traditional it sometimes seems confining. Some see the farm family of the future gradually evolving toward the urban family of today on this account; others believe that this cannot happen in any great measure because of the peculiar conditions under which the farm family must live. Whatever the future has in store, it is clear that the present is a situation of difficult adjustment, for true communities find themselves somewhat out of place in a world of rational, differentiated, accessible groups.

Passing over the village family as a transitional type, we are confronted by a very different picture when we come to regard the city family. The work, instead of being done in common, is divided into two types—that which the father does away from home, and that which the mother, with some assistance from the children, does in the home. The father's job is a reality to the children chiefly because it brings in an income which they are eager to help con-

sume. They know in a general way what their father does, but in many cases they have never seen him at work, and in some cases they have no conception of the work's significance to the larger life.

Not only are the activities constituting the basic source of the family's livelihood performed outside the home, but much of the processing of consumers' goods formerly done in the home has been taken over by specialized agencies. There is less home canning, less sewing, less baking, less washing and dry cleaning. Such services are today performed mechanically at so low a cost that most housewives prefer to spend a little more money and save themselves the corresponding work. This gives the woman whose family is not large sufficient time for leisure activities, and at the same time it relieves the children of home chores. But since city conditions make land expensive, houses tend to have small yards and a large percentage of families live in flats or apartments. The opportunities for recreation in and about the home are therefore few. Correspondingly, enticing means of recreation are available at a distance. Playgrounds, moving pictures, amusement parks, clubs, and gay shop windows beckon, and mother and children answer—but not together. Thus the family is likely to find itself gathered as a group for the first time at the evening meal. This is the time, if ever, when the urban family achieves its sense of solidarity. In well-integrated families such mealtimes give the opportunity for each member to bring back to the whole his experiences of the day for the edification, counsel, or amusement of the others. A real exchange and sharing of such experiences makes a good substitute for the common work of the farm family. Attitudes of affection and respect are developed as well as common values. But unfortunately this picture of the evening meal is perhaps not typical. In many families the father comes home tired from a monotonous day's grind, or the mother has been unable to make the budget stretch to cover some needed item, or the son has got into mischief

in company with the rest of his gang. Then the meal is a time of complaint or recrimination, and the best chance that the family has for feeling its unity is lost.

The evening hours are likely to suffer from the same differentiation of interests as the daytime ones. The father often wants a little recreation with his friends at a lodge hall or a billiard parlor. Even if he and his wife go out together, they seldom take the children. And if they both stay home, like as not the children are off to a movie or take the automobile to go "joy riding" with their friends. Not very common is the old-fashioned family circle with the father reading his paper, the mother sewing, and the children doing their lessons. The city has created too many attractions that compete with the fireside.

The city family has less unity than formerly in part because of its reduced size. The decline in the birth rate has been so marked that there are many families with either no children or only one, and two has become the modal number for the cities. This means that children do not find playmates within their own homes so much as they formerly did, that there are often not enough people to play family games, and that there is not that full companionship of which those who come out of large families so frequently speak.

The lack of playmates at home, the cramped quarters which discourage the bringing of friends there, the attractiveness of commercial amusements and playgrounds, and the absorption in the extracurricular activities of the school have brought about a real separation between parents and children. The two Middletown books document the fact beyond question.[1] This situation has been blamed as a contributing factor, if not the chief one, to our high rate of juvenile delinquency. Accordingly a strong countermovement, whose aim is to reintegrate the family, has set in during the last decades. Women's clubs study child care,

[1] Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown* (New York, 1929), Chap. XI and *Middletown in Transition* (New York, 1937), Chap. V.

universities and colleges offer courses in child psychology and child development, psychiatric clinics are set up to deal with problem children and to educate their parents. Thus the more enlightened portion of the population is aware of the problem. We can imagine the parents saying, "We must remember to play with our children." And no doubt many of them do. But it is equally certain that many of them do not, for the tide setting the other way is too strong for them to breast. They go with the current, and the children go off to play with their fellows.

This whole situation may be interpreted as the attempt to regain rationally and by effort that family companionship which was formerly unconscious and effortless. Whether the family can be held together or even strengthened as long as the world around it is so rampantly individualistic is a question that only time can answer. Without a change toward greater integration in the surrounding culture it seems doubtful.

The split between parents and children is often matched by one between husband and wife. The same general forces of differentiation of interests and individualism are responsible. The fact that, although such a split does not always result in divorce, one out of every six marriages in these days comes to that termination is decisive testimony to the amount of disharmony between husbands and wives. Undoubtedly one of the factors in this situation is the attitude toward marriage itself. In a time of almost exclusive emphasis upon romantic love many young men and women enter marriage with impossibly blissful notions regarding it. The subsequent realization that the opposite partner has queer opinions and even faults of character is such a shock to these romantic preconceptions as to shake the marriage to its foundations. Less exaggerated hopes and more willingness to regard marriage as a creative experience in which people work out their lives, rather than as a Paradise into which they enter immediately, would have a salutary influence.

One striking feature of the city family is the rarity of households containing relatives other than the parents and children. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins do not find their homes with sons, daughters, brothers, or sisters nearly so much as formerly. And families feel few obligations toward such collateral relatives. Moreover, children take less responsibility than in the nineteenth century for their aged parents. As a result of the mobility of the American population it often happens that they are hundreds or thousands of miles apart, but the psychological distances between them may be even greater. Nothing could more conclusively demonstrate the individualistic character of modern life.

The families of recent immigrants form a marked exception to this tendency of the city family to limit sharply its feeling of responsibility for kindred. These immigrants bring with them their Old World family feeling and it is preserved in their urban colonies here. Only with the coming to maturity and marriage of children born in this country does the New World attitude come to expression. And the wrench for immigrant parents who have looked after their own fathers and mothers can well be imagined when their own children show an unwillingness to do the same.

The consequence of the individualization of family members which springs from the differentiated associations of modern life is that the role-structures of families vary widely. With this variety in mind, Burgess has suggested that the family can best be studied as a unit of interacting personalities.[1] Though he was referring chiefly to city families, even for these the statement seems extreme. There is still a cultural mold within which members play their roles, and if it seems not to be there it is perhaps only because the individuals rattle around in it much more than when it fitted more closely. This free play frequently

[1] Ernest W. Burgess, "The Family as a Unity of Interacting Personalities," *The Family*, VII (March, 1926), pp. 3–9.

makes possible a difference in the conception of a role between two members of the same family. Thus a husband may think he has performed his family function fully when he has provided support. His wife, however, may feel that a husband's role properly includes acts of affection and respect toward her, some responsibility for the rearing of the children, and conduct in public which throws reflected glory upon the family. In an earlier time such different conceptions of roles and the friction resulting therefrom were rare indeed, because the traditional culture defined the roles much less equivocally.

We may think of the family as having three possible sorts of unity: a bioeconomic or bread-and-butter unity, a sentimental or affectional one, and a community of interests and values. Any one may exist in any degree in a particular family. If we apply these concepts to the differences between the rural and urban families which have been sketched, we can see just how great is the divergence. The farm family is obviously the stronger in its bioeconomic unity. The group is a productive as well as a consuming whole. In the sphere of personal attachment or response there is no reason why either type should be more integrated than the other. As was pointed out, the rural family may suffer from the feeling of the wife and children that they are being enslaved by a system of production to which urban people do not have to submit. But on the other hand the heterogeneity of interests in the city often works back upon affection to lessen it. With respect to common interests and values, the farm family seems clearly more unified. There may be little to choose so far as common ultimate values are concerned, but on the score of common interests the rural family is superior. The city family members can perhaps bring their interests together and make them common in conversation, but the farm family members have little but common interests to start with. We may sum up our comparison by saying that the rural family has most of the strength of the nineteenth century family, with some

loss of affection because of a feeling of constraint. The city family, in contrast, is held together by little except emotional bonds and a few common values. This is what sociologists mean when they say that the modern family is chiefly based upon the wish for response.

The depression that began in 1929 undoubtedly carried the urban family back in many cases toward a more traditional type. Economic necessity required more tasks to be performed in the home, and many of these tasks required the cooperation of family members.[1] The economic deprivations also tended to strengthen the expressions of family affection where there was already a sound foundation of sentiment.[2] The family became a larger element in the lives of its members simply because they could not afford to indulge other interests so much as before. But all such evidences of renewed solidarity must be regarded as very insecurely based, and most of them will almost certainly vanish again when these families get back to their former position of economic security. That some of them may retain a permanent precipitate of the depression's influence is perhaps little more than wishful thinking.

The contemporary family, despite all its structural weakening, is not a mere voluntary group or association. The persons who form it do not rationally come together for particular purposes and as rationally forsake it when those purposes are fulfilled. There is a normative character about the family which voluntary associations lack. There is an "oughtness" about one's membership and participation. Tönnies has said that there is a different kind of will operative in such "community" groups—an organic will which is not to be identified with the arbitrary will expressed in voluntary associations.[3] He believes that it springs

[1] Samuel Stouffer and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Research Memorandum on the Family in the Depression* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1937).

[2] Robert C. Angell, *The Family Encounters the Depression* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 145–146.

[3] *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig: 1935), Book II, Part II.

from deeper sources of our being, that it is preliminary to thought rather than expressive of it. In our society the only other group that would possess this will to any great extent would be the Roman Catholic Church.

This is perhaps another way of saying that the family has an institutional character. It expresses common human sentiments and values. It is so deeply rooted in the fundamental conditions of human life that all naturally look upon it as right. Indeed our notions of right develop in and through the family to such an extent that we probably accept the family first and rationalize its rightness afterward. To put it differently, the family is not so much conducive to our ultimate values as it is an ultimate value itself. We think of social utopias in terms of broader relations similar to those of the family. Husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister are types of relationship which we idealize. We cannot conceive a satisfactory life without them.

The moral obligations that go with family life are thus not externally imposed; respect for parents, love of children, kindness toward, and care for, other family members spring from our earliest and most authentic experience. They are not attitudes that we take simply in order to avoid the penalties of not so doing. This gives the family a stability that can be matched by no other group in our culture, a stability that is likely to be underestimated by those who are preoccupied with divorce statistics and other signs of disorganization. These may represent the degree to which family life fails to measure up to the accepted ideal quite as much as a breaking down of the ideal itself. Indeed the tendency for divorced persons to remarry and the reputed greater success of their second marriages tend to lend support to this view.

That the family does still occupy a central place in our social life and culture is shown strikingly in two ways. First, the individual tends to think of his own life course in terms of family relations. He begins as the helpless infant

in his mother's arms, progresses through childhood protected and guided by his family, typically breaks away from it only to marry and found a family of his own, and then passes the remainder of his life raising and caring for his own children. This is not just an outsider's view of a person's life, but it is the course he himself regards as natural and proper. In the second place, the most searching judgment of a person is passed in relation to his performance of his family role. Almost everything else is forgiven him if he is good father and husband or a good son, and nothing can atone for failure in these respects. It is true that we do not always know how a person fills his role in the family, but if we would judge his character we make every attempt to find out. For us the family still remains the essential social relationship. If common values are anywhere brought to expression in modern life it is here.

It is difficult to say with any assurance what the role of the contemporary family is with reference to the fostering of common societal values. In a simpler day that role was great. A devotion to common values was achieved within the family and then projected outward upon the life of the wider society. This was accomplished not so much by an explicit teaching as by day-to-day experience. In most families children learned to live in a real community, to understand the value of moral unity. They enjoyed such qualities of a common life in the family as self-expression for all, a sense of security, general obedience to rules, mutual appreciation, kindliness, and a strong sense of loyalty. And they tended to assume that those outside the immediate circle deserved to enjoy these too. Cooley has pointed out that those systems of larger idealism like Christianity and democracy which are most human and therefore of most enduring value have always been based upon experience in primary groups like the family.[1] It is true that the family has ever been a relatively simple form of organization and that therefore projection of its ideals

[1] *Social Organization* (New York, 1909), p. 51.

has only yielded rough guidance in the larger sphere of society. But the common orientation has been deeply rooted in concrete experience and, like that springing from the old neighborhood, has made up in power what it lacked in detailed applicability.

In our life, however, there are real barriers to the successful projection of family common values. Chief among these is the fact that in many respects the larger life does not furnish much basis for a real "we"-group. It is so highly differentiated and class divisions run so deep that the extension to it of primary ideals, an extension natural in a homogeneous or simply heterogeneous society, is hampered. Some would argue that these classes themselves, stemming in the main from effects of large-scale capitalism, are more natural focuses for "we"-feeling; and that the primary ideals of the family tend to be projected only to embrace the class to which the family belongs. Although this seems to be an extreme view because of the power of the sense of nationality, it points to a real weakness in our societal situation.

Even admitting this limitation on the family's integrative power, we are perhaps justified in assigning the family a large share of the credit for whatever societal integration we possess. Its influence in the direction of common orientation is more deep-rooted than that of the state, more universal than that of the church, and more intimate than that of the school. If classes should become more aware of their common obligations to the whole society so that the barriers to the extension of primary ideals were lessened, the integrative power of the family would again become of predominant importance. People would more and more regard those in other social classes as participating in a common life, and that viewpoint would give a basis for a society-wide projection of values.

Thus we arrive at what may seem to be a paradoxical conclusion with regard to the family. Its ability to foster common orientation in the members of our society has been

considerably weakened, but as a structure it is still regarded as an expression of our common values. This is not paradoxical, however, if we remember the individualism of Western culture. We Americans look upon the family as a necessary means to the rearing of children, as a form within which individuality can be developed. It never occurs to us to ask whether it is developing in our children devotion to the wider society. And even if we did think of this aspect of the matter, we might still say that such devotion is a problem for the school or the state, not for the family. The family is an aspect of the good life but is not necessarily productive of much societal integration.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH

The church is a type of group, which, like the state, antedates the conditions that have given rise to the capitalist enterprise, struggle groups, clubs, and benevolent groups, but which, unlike the state, has not been forced to take on many new functions and thereby completely change its character. This is not to say that the church has not been deeply affected by the basic changes of modern life.

We shall not attempt to include in this discussion a consideration of sects, those religious groups which are still young, belligerent, and distrustful of external organization. Since ours is a time of rapid change and considerable disorganization, we should expect the rise of such sects, for they are one way in which new definitions of the situation appear. But until they mature they belong more to a discussion of social movements than to one of societal structure. In the days of their youthful enthusiasm for the ideal, sects form moral communities almost completely dissociated from the world about them. It is only as their members become less ardent and their membership more heterogeneous that a structure develops which serves both to hold the group together and to define relations with the rest of the society.[1] Then they have become denominations.

America presents a puzzling picture of an amazing number of denominations, in each of which, perhaps, are greater differences between individual churches than exist

[1] See Ellsworth Faris, "The Sect and the Sectarian," *Personality and the Social Group*, E. W. Burgess, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), pp. 134–150.

between the churches of different denominations as wholes. The key to the puzzle is historical. The separation of church and state in our Constitution gave all churches a chance to recruit members. On the basis of this opportunity, the variety of peoples, cultural areas, and stages of assimilation which were characteristic of the westward expansion across the continent produced a great number of denominations. Not only did many different nationalities come from Europe, each bringing its own church, but splits in denominations occurred in this country because of the cultural differences between different waves of immigration of the same nationality. Thus, in the cases of both the Lutherans and the Dutch Reformed, the earlier immigrants had become so assimilated to American culture, and their church had evolved so much in this country, that later immigrants found them too unorthodox. These latter therefore established denominations more like the mother church. The pioneer belt was also productive of indigenous sects which soon developed into denominations. The dispute over slavery which culminated in the Civil War split almost all the denominations which then crossed the Mason-Dixon Line, thus compounding the existent multiplicity.[1]

Gradually, however, as the continent became filled up and communication improved, a new tendency set in. Cultural differences between sections began to be less marked, so that persons moving from one section to another could take their denomination with them. Where formerly a particular habitat gave rise to a special denominational offshoot, the habitats had now become similar enough for many denominations to occupy the same habitat. This tendency worked to spread all denominations throughout the country and place them all in close competition with one another. Thus the evangelical propensity, which one

[1] The best discussion I know of the whole question is H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, Inc., 1929).

might have expected to die down with maturity, was kept alive by the rivalry for members in all sections. American churches have never been able to assume the complacent attitude that is so likely to be the result of state establishment. The general result has been a tendency toward a similarity of churches in the same social situation, regardless of denomination, and great differences between churches of the same denomination corresponding to various social situations. For instance, the rural church is a definite type, the church in a city residential section is another, and the downtown metropolitan church still another.

This geographical spreading of each denomination and differentiation of church types within it has tended to make denominational structure more similar than the theories regarding organization would lead one to expect. Each local church has had to be given a certain amount of independence in meeting its own peculiar problems, and on the other hand the local churches of all denominations feel the need of mutual support and counsel and the desire to carry out common plans and projects. In short, there develops something in the nature of a federation, or stronger, which puts partially self-directing local churches into a determinate relationship to some more inclusive ecclesiastical unit.

According to the interesting analysis of Mooney and Reiley, there are four types of such relationship.[1] The most centralized is that in the Roman Catholic Church, with all authority delegated downward from the pope. This is not a federation at all, for local churches are carved as it were out of the theoretically universal church, and they remain completely dependent organs of it. Though bishops are nominated locally they must be confirmed by the pope. A second form is the episcopal, of which the Episcopalian and Methodist churches are examples. As

[1] *Onward Industry*, Chap. XX. It is surprising to find so thorough a treatment of church organization in this book concerned with business. See Chaps. XVI–XX.

in all American Protestant churches the ultimate authority rests with the members and is delegated upward to officials. The effective power is in the hands of the bishops, and the organization is highly nucleated under them in their respective geographical regions. The local church, in the case of the Episcopal denomination, can choose its own rector; in the Methodist, the power to designate ministers rests with the bishop. The difference between the episcopal form and the third one, the presbyterian, is merely that in place of the bishop is a collective body, the presbytery. The Presbyterian and Reformed Churches are examples. The presbytery is selected from below and conforms to American democratic notions. It has not so much power as have episcopalian bishops because it meets only periodically and is unable to exercise the same continuous control. It confirms the ministers selected by local congregations. We reach the most decentralized form in the fourth one, the congregational. The Baptist and Congregational Churches are examples, and the Jewish synagogue might be placed here too. The local group remains theoretically completely autonomous. The only binding connection between local churches is creed and doctrine. If as a matter of fact they do establish central organizations, that, as Mooney and Reiley well put it, is a delegation of authority *outward*, not *upward*, since they give to the central body no power over themselves but only over such external programs as missionary work. It is interesting that the forces of modern life have been increasing the importance of this central denominational organization despite the protests of some local churches.[1]

Thus we see that the geographical spread of a denomination tends to produce connective tissue in the way of central organization, but that the degree of authority which that organization possesses varies widely. In the day-to-day life of the individual local church, however, the importance

[1] H. Paul Douglass and Edmund DeS. Brunner, *The Protestant Church as a Social Institution* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1935), p. 99.

of this difference is easily exaggerated. Most churches live within the circle of the local community, and it is there that one must look if one is to appraise the meaning and the influence of the church in modern life.

The basic role in the local church is that of the member. This does not mean that the individual always shares in the ultimate control, for in the Catholic Church he definitely does not, and in other cases his control is strongly mediated. Rather the thought is that the member role is the one around which all the activities of the organization revolve. It is the member's life, his belief, his soul, that are the subjects of concern.

The other principal role is that of the minister or priest. His relationship to his congregation or parish is different from almost any other in modern life. He is both servant and master. If he is true to his religious values he feels himself a minister to those who need his counsel and guidance. But, because his office is so closely related to a transcendent ideal, there is bestowed upon its occupant something of a sacred quality in the eyes of the adherents. He is looked to as a leader and is granted an authority which perhaps he does not seek. Thus in a life so characterized by individualism and pressure groups as ours we find, in addition to the family, one relationship at least in which, typically, authority is willingly conceded rather than reluctantly granted, not because the follower hopes to be repaid in some material fashion but because the authority is exercised unselfishly and helpfully.

We shall not discuss the remaining structure of local churches, such as parish officers, because they are so different in the various denominations. In every case except the Catholic there is need of lay organization in which final authority can be vested. Following American custom, this organization is generally democratically chosen by the membership. But there is the same tendency here that we noticed in the case of social agencies, for the professional

staff—the clergy—to be more important than the lay groups which may have general oversight and final control. In short, bureaucracy—with no unfavorable connotation—tends to be present in churches as in all other types of complicated organizations. The Friends are perhaps the only denomination to escape it completely, and they do so by having no professional staff at all!

The functions of churches, as has been suggested, vary widely according to their social setting. The role-structure corresponds to the degree of elaboration of the program. The churches in great cities are likely to engage in many kinds of activities and to have a large staff, professional and voluntary. The division-of-labor principle is present just as surely as in the factories. At the other extreme is the open country church, which is very simple in all respects. It has more the character of an undifferentiated primary group, with the minister as the close friend of all the families in the membership. H. Paul Douglass, the results of whose exhaustive research are published in *1000 City Churches*, puts forward the hypothesis that the Protestant church of today is the latest stage in the evolution from this simple country or village type.[1] We should therefore perhaps do well to begin with the rural one and work toward the city. In so doing we are reversing the early history of Christianity, for then the church spread outward from the cities. The word "pagan" originally meant a village dweller, and even today *Heide* in German means both pagan and heath.

This treatment of the American church as evolving from a country type is probably not adequate for the case of the Catholic Church. Its unified yet far-flung organization, which o'erleaps national boundaries, enables churches in any particular social setting to draw upon the experience of similarly located churches in other lands. Thus perhaps

[1] *1000 City Churches* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1926), p. 76.

the Catholic Church in American cities is an embodiment of functions and structures worked out in European cities rather than the product of an evolution from the small-town church in America.

The open country church of today is not so thriving an organization as it was before the advent of the automobile. It is suffering from the competition of town churches which have now become accessible to rural people. These churches can afford more highly trained ministers and a more diversified program of activities. Their competition is likely to be greater as time goes on, for Kolb found that farm young people preferred the town church much more frequently than their parents.[1] Already many open country churches are having to simplify their programs, and 2 to 4 per cent of them are closing their doors each year.[2] The fact that there are fewer church members per capita in the open country than in towns perhaps indicates that there tends to be some loss of social solidarity at the extreme opposite to the metropolis, a supposition which has not often been expressed.

Douglass finds that the typical flourishing small-town Protestant church has, in addition to the Sunday service at which preaching is a principal feature, a Sunday School, a Ladies Aid, a Women's Missionary Society, and a Young People's Society.[3] All these organizations are such as to fit easily into the traditional neighborhood atmosphere of the small town. They are inclusive in the sense that they draw from all social classes in the congregation. They do not reflect the "social service" tendency which is so characteristic of city churches in which there are extremes of wealth and poverty. In short, the church in the village or small town is the religious expression of a closely knit, well-rounded community life which feels no nonreligious

[1] J. H. Kolb, "A Study in Rural Community Organization," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXIX, pp. 34–41.

[2] Douglass and Brunner, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

[3] Douglass, *op. cit.*, pp. 77–79.

problems with which the church is suited to wrestle in an organized way.

It is Douglass' contention that the church tries to retain its village character when the village becomes a city.[1] The tendency of the churches to move outward as the town grows, for instance, is an attempt to preserve their neighborhood character, to stay close to the members. This is a tendency that could hardly be understood by an established state church, nor is it so strong with the Catholic Church in America.

In the large town or city are to be found certain churches essentially like the village ones. These are the churches in immigrant areas or areas inhabited by recent arrivals from the country.[2] They have this village character for two reasons: the "colony" is in many ways a true neighborhood like the village; and the church is too poor to essay the extensions of its activities which other city churches have carried out.

When one comes to typical residential areas in which dwell urbanized Americans, areas in which church budgets are somewhat more ample, one finds a larger number of church activities and organizations. Some of these are religious in character, like a choir; others are more secular, like a Boy Scout troop or a recreational program. The first step away from the small-town situation is seen in the provisions in such churches for the needs of single men and women in addition to those of family members. The city attracts many young unmarried men and women, and the church is eager to enroll them. Another group to which these churches cater is composed of the children of neighborhood residents who are not members. These children come to the Sunday School because their friends do. Religiously they are not companions of their parents. They furnish another illustration of the differentiated character of city life.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 84.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 139–144.

The downtown city church is also a fairly well marked type. Where the city has not become so large as to make the attendance of well-to-do parishioners who live in the outlying residential districts difficult, this is the most elaborately organized of all types. It has many subsidiary organizations, both sacred and secular in character; Douglass and Brunner cite one church of this kind that could claim 60 such organizations.[1]

When the city has become a metropolis, however, the link with wealthier members and their families is harder to maintain on a participant basis because of the distance from their homes. The church has then usually tried to adapt to the situation by catering more to the needs of the transients in the city and to the poorer people who live in the so-called blighted area just outside the business district. Many of its old members still support the church generously even though they find it difficult to attend services regularly. Hence the church can have a well-trained minister and can employ a professional staff. Activities of a "social work" character are likely to predominate. Indeed, some of these churches have become virtual social settlements. Their membership is more heterogeneous than that of any other type. They are to the Protestant Church what the great Catholic cathedrals are to that denomination in the cities of many lands.

As we pass from the simple country church to the elaborate city type the division-of-labor pyramid in the church becomes more complex. Also, volunteer performance of subsidiary functions tends to give way to their paid performance. Sunday School teachers, for instance, are more frequently remunerated in the cities.

The shift in the duties of the minister with the increase in size of his staff is marked. The minister with no staff finds himself chiefly taken up with his preaching and supervisory duties. He finds little time for the pastoral work of visiting the families of his congregation and looking

[1] Douglass and Brunner, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

after the sick. The minister in a small church who has some assistance is able to do more of this because his staff relieves him of other responsibilities. But in the largest city churches the tendency is reversed again because the elaboration of the staff structure involves a great deal of oversight on the part of the minister.[1] Under these circumstances the minister may ask the parishioners to come to him so far as possible, instead of his going to them, and may establish regular office hours for consultation. This is another interesting evidence of the tendency toward routine and impersonal relationships which is so characteristic of all aspects of city life.

There is a corresponding shift in the attitude and behavior of members toward the churches. In the village and small town there are relatively no more church members than in the big city, but the percentage of attendance at services in the small churches of towns is greater than in the large churches of the cities.[2] It is interesting to note that small churches in cities, presumably drawing their members from immigrant colonies or closely knit neighborhoods, are more like the small-town churches so far as attendance goes than they are like the great churches of the city.[3] Only about half the members of large city churches play any active role in the church, even to the extent of pledging support.[4] In the anonymous life of the metropolitan center, therefore, church membership seems to be more a matter of tradition than of active interest. This brings us face to face with the whole problem of the relation of church to the values of modern life, especially to the values of that aspect of modern life which seems to be constantly increasing in its dominance, the city.

Whether or not the church is an institution is a difficult question. According to the usage we have adopted,

[1] Douglass and Brunner, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

[2] Department of Research and Education, Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, *Information Service*, Issue of Dec. 12, 1936.

[3] *Loc. cit.*

[4] Douglass and Brunner, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

nothing is an institution which does not receive the approval of all classes of the population as an instrument of their common values. Under this definition it is obvious that no denomination in America can be an institution as could an established church. But what about "the church" in general? It cannot be gainsaid that most people think vaguely of the church as a good thing. People approve it as a beneficial influence even though they do not themselves participate. A sociologist analyzing Boulder City, for instance, found that the residents thought, when the town was being built, that they must have churches, not because they wanted them intensely for themselves, but because churches are part of the normal equipment of a town.[1] It would look odd to the world if Boulder City did not have them. Now this attitude is not contradictory of institutional status if the ones who hold it are naturally excluded from participation. Thus it is no denial of the institutional character of the social agency that only a small proportion of the population is actively involved in it. But is the church an organization from which, by its very nature, many persons are excluded? It would appear not. There seems no reason to doubt that the church would embrace almost all members of the population if they really regarded it as a necessary instrument for the realization of their ultimate values. That a very large proportion are left outside the church must be taken as proof that it is not an institution in contemporary American society.

This is undoubtedly a change from the situation in the latter half of the nineteenth century. At that time much of the life of the local community revolved around the church, and it seemed one of the foundation stones of the social order. All classes of the population felt that the church was not only good for someone else but good for themselves as well. They felt a moral duty to support it, if not in a pecuniary way at least by attendance or encouragement.

[1] Reported by Dr. Ralph Danhof whose University of Michigan doctoral dissertation, "A Study of the Development of the Social Organization of Two Newly Established, Planned Communities," is unpublished.

The forces that have tended to deinstitutionalize the church are much the same as those that have de-moralized the local community. The growth in size of towns, the emergence of a cruder capitalistic self-seeking as the moral community has faded and the size of industrial operations has grown, the increasing impersonality and even anonymity of relations in the large city—these have made people so concerned with their private interests and pleasures as to banish the problem of an integrated life with one's fellows from consciousness. One might have thought that, as the old-fashioned close community became less powerful, the church would become stronger to counterbalance the loss in emphasis upon common values. But such seems not to have been the case. The whole character of life was so transformed that many people lost the sense of need for common orientation. Each seemed wrapped up in the concerns of himself, his family, and his friends.

It is of course possible that the common orientation which used to be expressed in loyalty to the church is now expressed in loyalty to some other social institution. The frequent criticism of the church for not keeping up with contemporary social and economic problems would suggest a reason for such transfer of allegiance. And there is some positive evidence that both the state, as it takes on humanitarian functions, and benevolent groups are becoming more and more the guardians and transmitters of common ultimate values. But after all is said it seems doubtful that it is merely a case of shifting from one form of institutionalization to another. There has been a real growth of narrow individualism, a real decline in the power of systems of moral obligation which achieve the loyal support of persons from all walks of life. We live in a time when men, to an almost unprecedented extent, go it alone and are their own moral guides.

Probably the very general control of the church by the capitalist class has been an additional reason for its gradual loss of institutional status. There has been no general revolt from the church on the part of the laboring classes

but merely a slow loss of confidence in it as it has seemed to support the programs and policies of the dominant class. The church has not always appeared to be wholeheartedly devoted to the realization of our common humanitarian values, at least as those are interpreted by the less privileged classes.

The loss of institutional status does not mean that the church is disintegrative in its influence. If there were a single, established church, its societally integrative significance would no doubt be greater,[1] but the various churches are still influential in producing common orientation.

The role of the church with reference to societal integration is complicated by the fact that religious conceptions contain transcendental ends and values as well as empirical ones. The qualities of life worth striving for are not only relative to existence here and now but include relations with God throughout eternity. Theoretically at least societal integration upon this earth might be a matter of complete indifference as compared with the importance of the right relation to God. But actually the Christian church, as well as Judaism, stresses the importance of the earthly fellowship of men. Whatever the differences between faiths and denominations may be, they all seem to foster a humanitarian social ethic that makes it possible for their adherents to have common values so far as this life is concerned. That this humanitarian ethic is very similar to that ideal of moral unity which Professor Cooley believed was a natural product of primary group experience[2] is not to be wondered at. No religion could long survive that worked at cross purposes with the most vital influences of sociopsychological development.

It is true that Protestantism has tended to give each individual full moral responsibility and that Catholicism has taught that only in obeying the precepts of the organ-

[1] See T. S. Eliot, *The Idea of a Christian Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1940).

[2] *Social Organization* (New York, 1909), pp. 33–35.

ized church can one be fully moral, but this difference has made no dichotomy in viewpoint concerning broad, societal relations. The Catholic has a firmer belief in the indissolubility of marriage and has taken strong positions on contraception and other current issues, but when it comes to such matters as the value of justice or of humanitarianism there is no disagreement. As a matter of fact the various churches in America have tended in a considerable degree to produce an orientation common to the members of all of them. And this orientation is in no way out of harmony with traditional American ideals. Political principles and religious values have not been in conflict since the slavery issue was settled.

The doctrines promulgated by the churches tend, however, to be vague with respect to the most pressing modern problems. Churches lend support to such well-established institutions as the state and the family, but they are uncertain as to what their stand should be on policies with regard to wages, unemployment, and public works. Their societal values have not given rise to positive principles of action. And what is more arresting, the so-called liberal churches, which have tried to do so, have suffered for it. When they have attempted, in addition to preaching pure religion, to wrestle with burning political and social issues from the pulpit, they have not held their membership as well as the more traditional churches.[1] People cry for the church to keep up to date and face contemporary issues, but, when it does, many of these same people do not attend. The resolution of this paradox seems to lie in the recognition that when the church shifts from the transcendental field of values to the detailed consideration of everyday life it shifts from a position of monopoly to one of severe competition. It has to share its authority with many other social forms. And it may appear to many a not particularly effective agency for meeting the problems of modern life.

[1] See Cooley, Angell, and Carr, *Introductory Sociology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. 465.

The fact of the matter is that church activities seem to have no very close connection with community welfare. After a careful examination of the relation between church membership and many indexes of welfare in a large number of American cities, Thorndike says:

"On the whole, unless the better communities under-report their church membership or the worse communities over-report theirs, we must suspect that the churches are clubs of estimable people and maintainers of traditional rites and ceremonies rather than powerful forces for human betterment.[1]

Another shortcoming of the church as a factor in societal integration is its general loss of influence. This is not so much shown by any decrease in membership as by the greater difficulty it has in enlisting the members' interest and devotion. The competition of the many distracting influences like the automobile, the moving picture, and the radio is proving very serious. Whatever integrating power the church exercises is influential with a decided minority of the population. However important many members of this minority are, it is not to be denied that there are also many of the leaders of our society who are quite outside the church. The church probably represents as adequately as any group the common ultimate values we do have, but it does not awaken a loyalty to them among most of those whom it wishes to reach.

We conclude, then, that the church in contemporary America is not so much rejected as ignored. Despite its undoubted influence upon the minds of the younger generation and its integrative service in stimulating a sense of common direction in a large minority of the population, it is not generally regarded as the indispensable institution

[1] *Your City* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1939), p. 99. He finds that the correlation of church membership with percentage of illiterates is 0.62; with per capita circulation of reputable magazines, −0.23; with percentage of persons 16 and 17 years old in school, −0.39; with per capita circulation of library books, −0.31; with homicide, −0.30; and with deaths from venereal disease, −0.28.

that it once was. It takes its place as an accepted part of the social structure but is not looked upon as fundamental.

As to what is likely to be the future of the church one can say nothing with assurance. There are two reasons, however, for believing that the number of denominations in this country will decrease. First, the differences of doctrine seem less important than formerly, to the clergy quite as much as to the laity. The ultimate values which the church tries to mediate to men are, at least among the Christian churches, very similar in all denominations. Second, the battle for life which the church seems to be facing in our day will make mergers of denominations expedient as fast as they can be accomplished without alienating adherents. This is a very ticklish problem, and there is no doubt that mergers too soon would be quite as weakening to the churches as failure to merge at all. A less drastic step and perhaps a preparatory one is the general cooperation of Protestant denominations. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has now a national organization in which 22 denominations are represented, and its work is carried out through 22 state bodies and local councils in 52 cities.

Whether the churches will tend to form alignments that follow the cleavages of social classes is more problematical. At the present each of the large denominations tends to be broadly representative of all classes, largely because there has been so much changing of class in America that the sects whose membership was originally drawn from oppressed underclasses have completely changed their character. It would indeed be surprising if the increasing stratification of American society should not have some concomitant effect upon values and upon mediators of values like the churches. One could predict this with much more certainty if the church had more vitality and were a more powerful source of control over conduct. The fact that the members draw their moral inspiration from other sources as well as the church makes possible a heterogeneity of

classes in each of many churches that would be unthinkable otherwise.

Many writers and thinkers regard the great challenge to the church today to be, not science, but the lack of societal integration that is characteristic of full capitalism. It is thought that there is grave danger of the church allying itself with the very forces that are making our society such a pale imitation of a true community. Believing that this has already occurred, one writer has humorously said, "The Last Supper turns out to have been the first Rotary Club luncheon."[1] Unless the church can successfully symbolize to the people the values of humane living together as one aspect of the sacred in life, unless the church can once again become the inspirer and carrier of truly common values, acknowledged by all as a necessary part of the social structure, it will sink to a position of merely being tolerated.

[1] John H. Randall, *Our Changing Civilization* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1929), p. 279.

CHAPTER X

CLUBS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND COOPERATIVES

The same forces that have produced the capitalist enterprise, struggle groups, and benevolent groups have been in large measure responsible for the clubs and associations that are so prominent a feature of modern life. When the old-fashioned local community gradually became vestigial under the impact of modern communication and modern business, there appeared both a need and an opportunity. On the one hand the human need for friendly, sociable contacts was no longer being satisfied in the neighborhood group. On the other, modern means of communication and transportation were enabling people to get in touch with one another over greater spatial areas. Further, people were becoming more specialized in their interests owing to an increasing division of labor. The natural result of that need and of this opportunity was that the sociable wants should come to be satisfied by new types of groups. This is particularly true in the large city where the individual would otherwise be socially lost.

> Being reduced to a stage of virtual impotence as an individual, the urbanite is bound to exert himself by joining with others of similar interest into organized groups to obtain his ends. This results in an enormous multiplication of voluntary organizations directed toward as great a variety of objectives as there are human needs and interests.[1]

It is an interesting fact that these groups represent a sort of halfway house in our social structure between the old-fashioned communal type of life, which still survives to a large extent in the family and the older and more traditional churches, and the new, rational, contractual

[1] Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV (July, 1938), p. 22.

type of relation, which we found so characteristic of the capitalist enterprise. Longing after friendship and fellow-feeling, but not being able to obtain them in the old way, men have turned to voluntary groups within which they can build an *esprit de corps* reminiscent of that which formerly marked the local community.

These groups, however, are no longer many-sided like a true community, but are in varying degrees specialized. The broadest of them all, the college fraternity, comes close to being a home away from home, but even it can scarcely bring the whole personality within its embrace. A learned society, on the other hand, has a very narrow function and may appear to be little more than a rational, contractual organization. Even here, however, the members do know one another and do have some of the warmth of personal feeling which is so characteristic of these intermediate groups.

The number of types of clubs and associations is legion. Every year we hear of new ones. Since we could not possibly discuss each by itself, we have grouped them into three broad categories: clubs, associations, and cooperatives. As here used a club is a voluntary association concerned with the pleasant or profitable use of leisure time. An association is a group whose members have a professional or technical interest that can be furthered by mutual contacts and reciprocal stimulation. A cooperative is a voluntary group formed for the pursuit of common economic ends on the principle of one member, one vote, rather than on that of votes in accordance with stock holding. All three are to be distinguished from struggle groups, though the difference between them is sometimes not great. As was pointed out in an earlier chapter, labor unions have sociable as well as struggle functions; whereas professional associations like the medical societies are by no means averse to engaging in conflict when they believe vital interests are at stake. One can only ask whether the usual orientation is outward toward a hostile

world or inward toward pleasant friendships or technical interests.

Again, there are many groups called associations in daily speech which fall into our category of benevolent groups and which are not included in this chapter at all. The distinction here, however, is clear, for an association in our sense is concerned with the development of its own members, while the association which is a benevolent group (*e.g.*, a child welfare association) is interested in the welfare of persons who are not members.

Perhaps most closely related to the club, sociologically speaking, is the young religious sect, though the public would hardly think of confusing them. A sect is closed to the outside world, a group of believers who wish to follow a sacred pattern of life. New converts are accepted only after rigid scrutiny of their qualifications and are usually initiated with religious rites. In short, in Max Weber's phrase, a sect is a whole of qualified people. So, of course, is a club or association. The distinction has to be drawn in terms of the group's orientation. Clubs and associations are oriented toward more immediate and mundane ends, and not in the same degree as sects toward the fulfillment of ultimate values. When clubs become secret societies, however, they take on many of the attributes of sects.

The very essence of clubs, associations, and cooperatives is that their members participate voluntarily. They join willingly and may resign when they wish. It is of their nature, then, to be democratic in structure, since in this epoch of individualism people are not wont freely to subject themselves to control, in the setting up of which they have no share. This does not prevent a hierarchical organization, but the general rule is that the officers are chosen by the members and are constantly responsible to them. There would otherwise be great danger of the secession of disgruntled elements. One can say therefore that in clubs, associations, and cooperatives there is one

basic role, that of membership, and that the other roles are dependent upon it. This can be the case here to a greater degree than in struggle groups because there the external battle requires close organization and strict obedience to the behests of the leaders.

The lodge or fraternal order is the oldest type of club we have; and among such Masonry is the most venerable, the most widespread, and the nearest to a true sect. The present organization of Masons throughout the world dates back to 1717 when four lodges, which had persisted from the operative masonic guilds of the cathedral-building epoch, united in London to form a masonic order.[1] The organization was not to be confined to any one occupation, class, or religious denomination, but was expected to include in one brotherhood men of sound moral character and religious belief from different walks of life. Masonry was in harmony with the awakening social and political ideals of the middle of the eighteenth century, and it had a remarkable growth throughout the world. Many of the British nobility early became Masons, so that the attainment of membership in the order became an object of striving for the middle-class *bourgeoisie*. Wherever English trade and English armies went throughout the world Masonry spread, and it early crossed the English channel to the continent.

The Masonic lodge of today in this country is likely to have as members the more prosperous citizens of the town or city. It retains its secret rites and its humanitarian ideals, but it is probably true that the two chief interests served are those of sociability and prestige. Masonry is not, and never has been, a true sect because it has no cult, no sovereign remedy for all ills. For this reason it has never had the dynamic fervor in pushing its ideal that true sects have. It has quite naturally drifted into the passive attitude toward social problems which is characteristic

[1] See Frank H. Hankins, "Masonry," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, X, p. 177.

of most lodges today. Lacking such clear-cut moral issues as made the French Masons condemn the Treaty of Versailles, American Masonry has tended to become a club for those who are, or want to be, leading figures in social and business life.

The other fraternal orders, like the Elks, the Moose, and the Oddfellows, are slightly different from the Masons.[1] They derive from Masonry on one side and the English workingmen's friendly societies on the other. They were founded to combine the secrecy and sociability of Masonry with self-help in meeting such difficult pecuniary problems as sickness and funeral expenses. They drew their membership from a less well-to-do class than the Masons and they were different also in that many of them had a basis in some particular religion, craft, or nationality. Immigrants, who were quite naturally an easy prey to fraudulent insurance schemes, drew together into such orders for self-protection. As a general rule, the insurance aspects of these fraternal orders have tended to become less important with the passage of time because of the rise of great commercial insurance companies employing actuarial staffs that the orders could not duplicate. Hence the emphasis has come to be more on the sociable side. Here too, however, they have been dealt a severe blow—this time by the automobile and the radio. Before the First World War lodge nights were festive occasions looked forward to by thousands of working-class men. With the spread of the auto and the radio into the ranks of labor, other and more enticing forms of recreation are at hand, and the membership in lodges dwindles.

Lodges, then, tend to be class organizations, either made up of employers and professional people like the Masons, or of working-class people like the fraternal orders. They thus tend to substantiate the view that differentiations established through types of work carry over into recrea-

[1] See Frank H. Hankins, "Fraternal Orders," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VI, pp. 423-425.

tion. This is not a surprising phenomenon, since individuals feel more at home with those who can afford the same interests and pleasures. A discerning sociologist has said that the wealthy and the poor can talk about only three subjects without mutual embarrassment—the weather, religion, and philosophy.[1]

The continuing attractiveness of secrecy may perhaps be due to the fact that it builds up a sense of personal importance in a world of anonymity. There is an inner satisfaction in possessing something which not all the world has access to, particularly when one does not feel secure in one's social position. The original value that secrecy had, that of freedom from the suppression of monarchs and elite classes, must have vanished, at least in our larger cities, with the coming of anonymity.

Secrecy and the accompanying ritual serve the lodges by uniting the membership on a supra-rational basis. It helps to cement elements which otherwise would be too heterogeneous. The initiation ceremonies and the gradual stages of induction into full membership, which are characteristic of many lodges, serve to stress the importance of these unifying ritual elements.[2]

College fraternities and sororities are an application of the Masonic idea to another sphere of life. They have a history of somewhat more than a hundred years. Because they are residential groups they have an opportunity to cement a closer bond of fellowship than the fraternal orders already considered. They too are founded on high moral and social ideals, but in practice they develop no higher code in their members than is developed by any intimate group with common ends. Here too, there has been a tendency for membership to become a mark of distinction, with the result that sometimes their members become condescending, and nonmembers feel that they

[1] Charles Horton Cooley, *Social Organization* (New York, 1909), p 251.

[2] Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and Secret Societies," *American Journal of Sociology*, XI (January, 1906), pp. 441–498.

are missing the full benefits of college life. Because the influence of fraternities and sororities is exerted at a period in life after the main lines of character have been laid down but before the individual takes his lasting place in the larger society, their effect upon the structure of that society is slight.

An organization that fits into no general classification but is becoming not dissimilar to fraternal orders is the American Legion. Composed of persons who served in the armed forces of the United States during the First World War, it took on the characteristics of a self-interest struggle group during the first decade and a half of its existence. Its sociable and humanitarian functions were secondary. But, with the payment in full of the soldiers' bonus in 1936, the self-centered objectives of the Legion were largely attained, and the subsidiary functions rose to primary importance. Legion posts will probably settle down to being sociable clubs that take a special interest in the welfare of veterans, their widows, and their children.

The luncheon or service clubs are a relatively recent development. They have tended to crowd the fraternal orders out of the limelight that the latter once occupied. Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Exchange, and the rest are mentioned in the press more than any other kind of club, and one is constantly made aware of them through their roadside signs of welcome to visiting "brothers." Their unrivalled position is probably due not so much to what they actually accomplish as to the fact that they attract those in the local community who are already prominent.

Luncheon clubs are peculiarly fitted to the modern urban culture, are indeed a genuine expression of it.[1] In the first place they are essentially class groups. A luncheon meeting once a week is out of the question for wageworkers. Only employers and independent professional men are in a position to take an hour and a half

[1] Much of my analysis is derived from Charles F. Marden, *Rotary and Its Brothers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935).

off at noon. Thus the general cleavage in our towns and cities between the business and the working class is not in any way reduced by the requirement of these organizations that their membership be spread over many occupations. The breadth thus secured is only a breadth within a class, not one that crosses class lines.

Luncheon clubs are also a mirror of modern culture in that they provide a means for furthering one's career. If one is so fortunate as to be chosen, he will not only come to know the "right" people but will tend to be regarded in the community as a success. His business or profession will not suffer from such acquaintanceships or such favorable notice. That membership does not always bring the expected enhancement of social or business position does not prevent newcomers from expecting that it will. One's social status, fixing of which in medieval society was performed by the rigid class structure, is today being performed in large measure by voluntary groups like luncheon clubs.

The luncheon club is also perhaps a defense against the hustle and impersonality of American urban life. There can be no doubt that many business men feel that they are missing some of the amenities of life in their unswerving attention to their work. Perhaps the luncheon club is an attempt to bring back a little of the congeniality of the old-fashioned neighborhood and its feeling of "belonging."

In a similar way luncheon clubs fill another void in the life of the average business man. He finds his store or factory necessarily a place of cool calculation and rational judgment. He has little opportunity to express his finer feelings and impulses. Not only that, but he knows that many in the local community regard employers as a ruthless, profit-seeking class. Hence the attraction of the luncheon club, with its ideals of community service, its help to good causes. It lends dignity to a career that otherwise might merely possess dominance.

The structure of these organizations is very simple. Each local group elects its own officers, usually annually, and the president appoints committees. The attempt is made to keep all members active by requiring service on a committee or in some other capacity. Those who are not regular in attendance at the weekly meetings are dropped. The state and national federations mean little to the local chapters. The latter pursue their own course with only such integration with other chapters as comes from a common constitution and a national magazine.

The life of the club revolves about the weekly luncheon. At this time songs are sung, business transacted, visitors welcomed, and a speech of some kind given. Probably none of these is enjoyed so much as the friendly chat around the board with congenial acquaintances. The symbols, the songs, the slogans no doubt give an added warmth to friendship, but underneath it all friendship is the main thing. The fact that these organizations have no secrecy and no "home," but must eat in a hotel or other public place keeps them from producing stronger bonds among their members than they do.

It would be a mistake to conclude, however, that service clubs perform no services for the community. It is certainly true that they talk more than they act, but they do act. They frequently sponsor welfare activities such as hospital care for crippled children or a summer camp for underprivileged children. They also cooperate with established welfare agencies and with the schools in carrying out benevolent projects.[1] Another line of activity is that of boosting the local community, in the manner of Chambers of Commerce, and of trying to raise business standards. In the latter direction their influence seems to be negligible, though friendships within the organization undoubtedly tend to mitigate sharp competitive practices.

[1] But it is interesting that Thorndike found no correlation between the presence of Rotary or Kiwanis clubs in a community and its general "goodness." See *Your City* (New York, 1939), p. 101.

The activities of service clubs are what might be expected of busy, well-intentioned members of the business and professional class. Their welfare services are usually somewhat sporadic and unsystematic and tend to reflect a belief that the only social problems are those of a few "unfortunates" whose plight it is one's duty to ameliorate. But they are naturally not inclined to undertake or to favor any activities which challenge at all the capitalist system.

Women's clubs are in some respects similar to men's organizations in their societal functions and in some respects different therefrom. In part they are merely an expression of a desire for sociability which the neighborhood no longer satisfies and which business-class women at least have now enough leisure to satisfy elsewhere. In part, however, they represent an assertion of the emancipation of women. They are not struggle groups, but they are the symbols of a victory already won. Women have recently enough escaped the age-old domination of the male to have need of reassurance that it is really so. Participation in clubs similar to those of men gives them this reassurance.

The number of such clubs is beyond estimation, and their kinds are multifarious. The National Federation of Women's Clubs alone, which by no means includes them all, counts in the neighborhood of 14,000 member organizations having three million individual members. Some women's clubs are connected with men's fraternal orders as auxiliaries and perform similar functions. Others are connected with religious denominations and busy themselves with charitable and cultural activities. The Association of Business and Professional Women aims to improve the vocational opportunities for women as well as to provide occasion for friendly intercourse. The National League of Women Voters aims to stimulate women to use their ballot and educate them to use it wisely. The patriotic activities of such organizations as the Daughters of the American Revolution are well known. Perhaps the most

important of all types numerically is the club that meets weekly or biweekly in the homes of members to hear one another read papers and render musical selections. These represent a desire for "culture" which is very strong among middle-class women. As in the case of the patriotic societies there is also a considerable prestige element involved. The fluid state of American society, in which class lines are not hard and fast, makes membership in a choice club an avenue to social advancement. The Lynds have pointed out that in Middletown this social pace-setting is one of the chief functions of the business-class wives.[1]

City clubs and country clubs require little comment. Their purposes are obvious, their functions well known. As with all clubs and associations the membership role is basic, but a considerable staff may be employed which takes on the familiar aspect of the division-of-labor pyramid. This staff is dependent from the board of directors of the club, the manager serving as the apex and point of attachment. Indeed, some city clubs become so large and so impersonal that the physical equipment and the hired personnel become the central feature, with the members assuming an almost marginal role. This shows that, judged by externals, the line of demarcation between a capitalist enterprise like a hotel and a completely secularized club is thin. However, the principles on which the two work are altogether different. The notion of making a profit is meaningless for a club—it is, in fact, expected to lose money on its operations. Membership fees are meant to cover exactly those amenities and pleasures which cannot be had by the patrons of a capitalist enterprise.

These organizations have the obvious functions of serving meals and providing reading rooms, sporting facilities, and places for informal conversation. They have also, like most other American clubs, a status function. A great German sociologist, Max Weber, has said that for the

[1] *Middletown* (New York, 1929), p. 117.

American middle class the club is the means of becoming a gentleman.[1] We have tended to look upon membership as a badge of distinction, if not indeed of character. Thus clubs are a part of the selective process that winnows out the wheat of those who are adapted to American life.[2] Those who are fitted by qualities of personal attractiveness and sociability to become influential in business and professional circles become members of clubs, and this in turn gives them a leg up to the higher rungs of social position. It would be a cynical view, however, that regarded this as the chief function of city and country clubs. The enjoyment of leisure still has the precedence.

There is of course a great variety of children's clubs. Those that are established and controlled by adults have been considered in the chapter on benevolent groups. Most of the clubs that are wholly in the hands of their children members are ephemeral and do not constitute a very important aspect of societal structure. One type, however, that has received less attention than it deserves is the boys' gang.

According to Thrasher, who has made the most complete study of boys' gangs,[3] they develop out of play groups in the congested and "blighted" areas of our large cities. They are a natural adaptation of youthful life to an environment full of adult crime, poverty, and vice, and lacking in healthful play space. The child of these areas craves excitement:

> He finds this in his games and sports and athletics, in patronage of commercialized recreation, in stimulants and gambling and in predatory exploits. He lives in a world of adventure which it is difficult for the unseeing adult to comprehend. His imaginative exploits are often meaningless to the unsympathetic outsider but full of significance for

[1] Max Weber, "Rede auf dem ersten Deutschen Soziologentage in Frankfurt 1910." *Geaammelte Aufsatze fur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1924), p. 442.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 443.

[3] Frederic M. Thrasher, *The Gang: A Study of* 1313 *Gangs in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927).

the group itself. Gang activities often take on some of the aspects characteristic of political units in warfare or struggle for power. Each gang has its local territory which it defends against outsiders, and at the center of this is the "hangout," or territorial headquarters. There is a sort of struggle for existence in gangland which necessitates that every gang shall be on the defensive or offensive for play privileges, property rights, the physical safety of its members and the maintenance of its status in the neighborhood. . . . Beyond the territory proper of the gang are usually certain favorite "playgrounds," which include a congested and exciting business streets, rivers, canals and water fronts, the "bright lights" areas and the parks. In this area the members of the gang spend most of their time, and here they pick up their effective education. In fact, the physical layout of the city may be regarded as part of a "situation complex" which is an important factor in conditioning and directing the life of the gang; this is particularly illustrated by the relation between the location of the railroad tracks and "junking," an almost universal activity of the gang.[1]

The importance of the gang in American societal structure lies not so much in the number of individuals who come under its influence as in its isolation from the values which the larger society seeks to inculcate and its consequent importance as a school for adult crime. In the large cities most of those who are members of adult gangs or of racketeering "mobs" have come up through the boys' gangs. The corrupting influence that the underworld exercises upon politics is a vicious circle, for the smart politician in the slum districts learns to cultivate and ingratiate himself with the adolescent gangs.

No clubs are institutional in our society. Some of them, like the luncheon clubs, may feel they deserve such status, but the clubs themselves are not looked upon by the rest of the population as the accepted way of implementing common values. That none of the types we have considered is regarded as indispensable to the maintenance of a satisfactory society is perhaps indicated by the lack of any public concern when many kinds of clubs decreased in membership as a result of the depression. Both insiders

[1] Frederic M. Thrasher, "Gangs," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VI, p. 565.

and outsiders seemed to regard them as a luxury that could be done without when the economic shoe pinched.

Because clubs are not primarily struggle groups like political parties, there is no larger scheme of competition into which they fit that might have an institutional character. Their study therefore leads to the discovery of no societal structure which would constitute evidence of societal integration.

Though clubs do not appear to be closely connected with institutions, they might, like churches, develop some concern for the common welfare. Our study of them indicates that they differ greatly from one another in this respect. Boys' gangs are positively disintegrative because they develop an interest in conduct inimical to the mores. Most other clubs are not positively antisocietal, but they do not lead their members to think beyond the limits of the group itself. Some, like luncheon clubs, may feel that they are serving the whole society, but it is probable that they are merely encouraging concern for *what they deem to be* the common welfare. It is difficult for a group to know when its aims are consonant with those of the whole society unless that group is actively supporting well-established institutions. In the case of these clubs, almost their only certain contribution is the stimulation through their activities of a vague patriotism.

We have suggested the term "association" for those groups which represent the attempt to further a professional or technical interest through mutual stimulation and intercourse. This is of course a much narrower usage than is customary, so that many groups that bear the name "association" will be excluded from our present consideration. This departure from ordinary terminology can perhaps be justified on the ground of sharpness of concept; the usual usage is so inclusive as to lack precision.

Professional and technical associations are legion in American society. Almost every set of men whose com-

petence in their occupation requires that they keep abreast of a stream of developing ideas or techniques possesses such a group. The older professions—the ministry, medicine, law, teaching—have been joined by a host of newer professions and quasi-professional pursuits. We have associations of engineers, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, newspapermen, social workers, public servants, accountants, foresters, architects, artists, and musicians. The list could be extended almost indefinitely.

The main purpose of these associations is to keep the level of professional or technical competence high. To this end they have frequent meetings at which new doctrines, new methods, and new discoveries are explained; they publish professional or technical journals; and in varying degrees they attempt to influence the education and selection of those entering the occupation.

Most of these associations feel that they have a definite responsibility to the whole society. They acknowledge that they should cultivate in their members a devotion to the common welfare. It is the boast of many such associations that they maintain a code of professional ethics as well as a level of technical competence. It is very difficult to determine whether this boast is well founded or not. Probably the situations in the various professions are quite different. Medicine is usually looked upon as one that has a fine record in this respect. On the other hand some groups are admittedly concerned over their inability to maintain high standards. Several state bar associations, for instance, are interested in attempting to heighten the sense of societal responsibility among their members by developing moral tests for admittance to the bar. Such concern indicates both that many present lawyers are lacking in truly common orientation and that there is hope at least that this may be increased. It does not necessarily show, however, that it will increase, for the size of the groups involved and the anonymity of urban

life make the development of a strong sense of professional ethics difficult. We must reckon the influence of such associations, however, as being on the positive side and as being one of the bulwarks in our life against the further weakening of societal integration.

Largely because of their service in this direction these associations are likely to think of themselves as true societal organs or institutions. In the case of some of the associations, the learned societies for instance, this estimate of their societal importance is not shared by the general public. The associations are concerned with such esoteric interests that most of the public is not aware of them at all. They go their way, have their periodic meetings at which the members discuss scientific, technical, or literary questions, publish their journals, and the public is little the wiser. They differ from clubs chiefly because their experience is cumulative in a way that is not true of leisure-time groups.

In the case of other associations, such as the American Medical Association and the American Bar Association, the public seems in large measure to acquiesce in according institutional status. These associations are looked upon as guardians of the public interest. This status apparently rests upon two facts. First, each such association is usually exclusive in its field so that it appears to represent the whole profession to the world. Since there is no competing group with which comparison can be made, the association is assumed to be in the societal interest. Second, such associations have not behaved primarily as struggle groups. Hence the public believes that they can be trusted, where self-interest groups with their biases born of unregulated conflict cannot. Out of this situation has grown a theory that such associations represent a good middle ground between complete individualism and state centralization. It is thought that they control their members in terms of a professional code that makes unnecessary a political control that might be bureaucratic.

The public hardly goes so far as the associations themselves, however, in attributing institutional character to them. It has been widely noticed that some tend to act like struggle groups on occasion. This has been particularly true of those whose members are hired or are afraid they soon will be hired. Thus the American Association of University Professors has not only waged a vigorous fight for academic freedom, which can legitimately be regarded as a service to the public, but has also, by giving publicity to the facts, endeavored to better the economic position of the profession in good times and to protect it in bad. And the American Medical Association has become belligerent in the face of the threat of more socialized medicine.

Another reason for certain reservations on the part of the public is that the members of some of these associations seem ignorant of aspects of American society other than their own. Outsiders have some doubt whether they can frame a program that adequately envisages the needs of the underprivileged elements of the population. Professional associations talk in terms of society as a whole and no doubt wish to act in terms of it, but they do not always seem to possess the requisite knowledge.

It may seem odd to make our third type of group, the cooperative, with its economic motivation, a companion in this chapter to the club and association. It is done in the belief that in the structure of American society they occupy similar positions. They seem to be constructed on a similar sociological model. All three are private groups of persons voluntarily coming together to pursue activities which they deem to be in their own interests without taking an aggressive attitude toward other social groups. It is true that the cooperative movement has sprung from the conviction that there are grave injustices in the present functioning of the capitalist system and that cooperators hope ultimately to displace much of that system. But this does not make cooperatives struggle

groups, for they expect the change to come about through their superior effectiveness in competition, not through active conflict.

There are many variations on the theme of cooperation. The basic idea of economic democracy for which the cooperative movement stands is applicable at any point in the cycle of production, marketing, and distribution. We shall here treat only those types which are actually important in American society: consumers' cooperatives, credit unions, and agricultural cooperatives. This leaves out of consideration producers' cooperatives entirely, but this is justifiable because most attempts to set up and maintain self-governing workshops in this country have failed. The chief difficulties seem to have been the obtaining of sufficient capital from the members of the cooperative to compete with capitalist enterprises, and the securing of equally efficient management.

The most widespread type of cooperative in the world is that controlled by the consumers. These have not been so numerous as the agricultural cooperatives in this country, but of recent years they have had a mushroom growth. The essence of the consumer cooperative is that the persons who join together to form the group are united by one essential bond, that they wish to purchase the same commodities. On the production side they have no necessary link at all and in fact usually represent many different occupations. The cooperative often starts as a buying club that saves money for its members by purchasing and distributing commodities like coal or canned goods in large quantities. This club may then prosper to the point where it can begin to operate a coal yard, a retail store, or a filling station. The organization is simple. Every voting member must own at least one share of stock, but extra shares do not give him extra votes. The paid-up members elect a board of directors which has authority to operate the business and to hire a manager and other staff as may be needed. Profits from the enterprise are

used to build up the working capital and to pay dividends to members in proportion to the amount of their patronage. There are no dividends paid on stock holdings. The policy with respect to patronage dividends varies, some cooperatives contenting themselves with low dividends but trying to undersell competitors in price, others—and this is the general practice in this country—charging the prevailing prices and hoping to be able to return large dividends. The relation of the members to the cooperative is not, then, that of mere purchasers. Because they have paid a membership fee and because they expect to receive patronage dividends, they have a continuing interest in the group which expresses itself in membership on committees and other volunteer services.

The difference between a consumer cooperative and a capitalist enterprise is simply stated by saying that the two groups which are completely distinct in the latter—the owners and the purchasers—are united in the former. From that fact stems the relative indifference of the question of prices versus dividends. What the members do not get one way they get another.

From this base in retail distribution the consumers' cooperative movement has spread backward to wholesaling, to manufacturing, and even in a few cases to agriculture. The English national federation of consumers' cooperatives, for instance, operates the world's largest tea plantation, in Ceylon. This reaching backward along the line which the commodities traverse forward requires the accumulation of much capital and a highly efficient, integrated organization. It is therefore a slow process and has not gone far in this country, where the successful consumer movement, except among Finnish and Scandinavian immigrant groups, is recent.

The relation of the hired staff to the board of directors of a cooperative is little different from what it is in a capitalist enterprise. Cooperators stress the fact that they try to treat their labor humanely and to pay more

than the current wage, but there is no escape from the division-of-labor pyramid with authority in the board of directors mediated through a manager. Unlike most capitalist enterprises, cooperatives have usually encouraged their workers to organize.

It is interesting that consumers' cooperatives have succeeded most generally in this country in local communities of homogeneous nationality, particularly in the Finnish-dominated towns of northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. These immigrants brought the idea and tradition of cooperation with them from Finland, and they have made it work here because the values for which the movement stands have been embedded in a homogeneous culture. It is a real question whether these cooperatives will fare so well as they have in the past when the general American influences of urbanization penetrate these communities and break up their integrated culture.[1]

In the more typical American town of mixed national backgrounds, widely divergent social classes, and high residence mobility, the cooperative has found sledding harder. Since it can scarcely hope to produce great savings for its members from the start, and since it requires sacrifices of them in the way of volunteer service, there needs to be considerable enthusiasm for the idea in order to carry the organization over the initial period. Experience shows that this enthusiasm is not likely to be sufficient if the only source of it is the hope of future pecuniary benefits. There must be an admixture of social idealism. This is the reason that the movement stresses "education" so heavily. The attempt is made to foster a crusading spirit among the members, an ardent desire to share in the creation of a better social order.

The credit union is a special type of consumer cooperative. It operates as a small loan company for those

[1] See Leonard C. Kercher, "The Finnish-Dominated Consumers' Cooperative Movement in the North Central States" (unpublished University of Michigan doctor's dissertation, 1939).

members who wish to borrow and as a savings bank for those who have money to lend. Since it is a fiduciary institution, it is subject to much closer state control than other cooperatives. Its members must usually have some bond already in common, such as being members of the same profession, or belonging to the same labor union, before they are allowed by the state to organize at all. Once organized, these cooperatives function like the ordinary consumer societies.

Agricultural cooperatives are widespread and vigorous in this country. Some 3,400,000 farmers are grouped in some 10,900 of them.[1] Their functions are various. Although cooperative marketing of the products is the chief one, they also may purchase farm supplies and equipment, organize a credit union, or process their products cooperatively. The farmers remain independent so far as the actual operation of their farms is concerned, but they act as a group in their relations with the outside world. The principle of returns in proportion to patronage is carried on in this instance too. The more a farmer markets through his cooperative or the more supplies he purchases through it the larger his dividends. A farmers' cooperative may, like a consumers' one, employ a staff in addition to the labor the members contribute. When the processing of a product is undertaken the staff may become large. Thus many dairy cooperatives operate their own dairies and cheese factories. Also, cooperatives whose members are grain growers operate elevators and mills.

Cooperatives are not institutions in American society. One reason is that they are so few and inconspicuous as not to be well known to the bulk of the American public. Another is that the consumers' cooperative and the credit union clash with a deeply rooted American principle—

[1] R. H. Elsworth, "Statistics of Farmers' Marketing and Purchasing Cooperatives, 1937–38 Marketing Season" (Washington: Farm Credit Administration, 1939), p. 2.

that of individual initiative as embodied in competitive capitalism. This is not so true of the agricultural cooperatives, because their farmer members do not give up their private farming but only their private buying of supplies and their private selling of products. However, not even agricultural cooperatives can escape the distrust incurred by any form of business organization that competes with the capitalist enterprise.

Members of cooperatives are somewhat like members of luncheon clubs in believing that they are fostering societal integration though not having an institution to give them certain orientation. Cooperators are sure that they are working for the welfare of the whole society. In all the movement's literature it is emphasized that cooperation is not selfish, and the ideal held before its adherents is always an integrated commonwealth. But, so long as the cooperatives have not convinced the rest of the society of the value of their ideas, the movement does not contribute to societal integration. Cooperatives may well do so in the future, and in this respect they are more likely to have a unifying influence than luncheon clubs, but their day of general American acceptance has not yet dawned.

In general, the place of clubs, associations, and cooperatives in the American societal structure is that of minding their own business and being tolerated in so doing. Few of them even attempt to develop a broad societal orientation in their members—chiefly the luncheon clubs, the professional associations, and the cooperatives—and still fewer succeed. The very number and variety of such groups probably makes for a multiplicity of orientations and a differentiation of interest which augurs ill for societal integration. It is not surprising that most of them are not accorded institutional status. If the public clearly understood how these groups work, it is conceivable that it might come to regard more of them as forms that are the best ways of realizing common values. But our society is so complex and social distance between classes

is so great that the requisite acquaintance is probably unachievable.

We might say that these groups are the most untrammeled units in our society. They operate as relatively small and unimportant parts of a great whole, minding their own business and receiving slight heed from the public. They live in the interstices, as it were, of the structure, and are hardly a part of its main frame at all. An analogy may make this clearer. Let us imagine a public athletic field of a great city. It is carefully planned —baseball diamonds here, football fields there, tennis courts along one side, a running track, and so on. These fundamental arrangements are like the institutions of a society. But, between the designated fields and facilities, children will play games of tag and marbles, or perhaps they will fly kites. These activities were not foreseen by the planners; yet they constantly go on. They do not interfere with the planned sports, and they satisfy the needs of the children. They are like the clubs, associations, and cooperatives of our society.

Such a picture is unthinkable in primitive life. There the playing field is much smaller. The activities are carried on so close together that there is no room for such free and unfettered group expression. All is institutional, all comes under the control of the dominant cultural values. It is only in an enormous society like ours, where the mores leave great lacunae, that these voluntary associations can spring up.

CHAPTER XI

THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE VESTIGIAL COMMUNITY

In the preceding seven chapters we have tried to determine the effect upon societal integration of the differentiated social groups so characteristic of our time. Before we draw our general conclusions it seems desirable to focus attention on the local community. This will serve two purposes. The minor one is to prove that the assumption of the local community's moral desuetude, an assumption with which this study started, is well founded. The major one is to supplement our principal approach by surveying what is now happening in that area of life which was formerly so productive of common orientation. In considering the local community we are studying the rise of free-standing groups indirectly, much as one might study the potential strength of an army at the front by studying the quantity and quality of man power left behind. The groups we have considered have got out from under local community restraints and have left mute testimony to their independence.

In earlier, simpler societies, the local community was equally as important as the family and religious institutions in supplying the individual with a sense of basic common values. And it was much more important than the larger society itself which, because communication was poor, could foster such values only in the most general and abstract way. But the local community had worked out a way of actual common living. It was a world whose culture was in part unique. Over a period of time this culture had come to embody the values that were implicit in the mode of life. People accepted these common values as they grew up, just as they did the kind

of food they ate or the methods of agriculture they used. Each member of the community was accorded his place in the whole through the operation of accepted principles. He felt himself a member of a moral community.

And what was true of the individual as a will-unit was true also of groups. They were likewise in harmony with, and to that degree subservient to, community standards. All fitted together to form a highly integrated whole.

This type of local community has practically vanished in America. One may find it exemplified perhaps in a few isolated villages, but the great bulk of our citizens come under its influence no longer.[1] The improvements in communication and transportation, the growth of large-scale capitalism, and increasing social differentiation have produced a type of life antithetical to this old-fashioned local community. Even farmers no longer find their recreation together in a country neighborhood but come to town to enjoy the movies or the picnics provided by enterprising business men.

The various types of groups we have discussed in the previous chapters find themselves largely playing their parts upon a bigger stage. It is not so much that they have broken through the confines of the local community as that the latter has gradually melted away as an effective container. It is as if the sides and back of a theater stage were suddenly to dissolve into thin air and the actors be left playing their roles against the natural horizon. These groups are not so much brought under the influence of a larger whole as emancipated from the smaller one. They are little governed therefore by any sense of obligation except to their own self-contained moral principles.

The individual is not so morally emancipated as are these groups because he comes directly under the influence of the family and sometimes the church; whereas the groups only feel such influence indirectly through the mediation

[1] For a penetrating analysis of the decline of localism, see Carle C. Zimmerman, *The Changing Community* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938).

of their members. A strongly religious man is much more likely to embody his moral values in his personal conduct than in the conduct of a capitalist enterprise of which he happens to be the president. But, though there may be a difference in the degree of total moral emancipation, there is little difference in the emancipation from a sense of obligation to local community standards. These have vanished for the individual quite as much as for the group. The conventions that apply to manners and the like are hardly moral at all. It is because of this fact that we are justified in regarding the local community as morally vestigial.

The seeming exception to this general principle, the professional man in smaller towns, is interesting to analyze. The local doctors, for instance, feel obligations to look after the sick even though they are not paid for it. This sense of duty was certainly developed originally under the influence of the close community. It was taken up and reenforced by other agencies, however—in this case by the professional association itself. The sense of obligation is now almost completely supported by this secondary source, though it is perhaps true that it will not long survive the extinction of the moral community in which it first developed. Professional men will hardly go on feeling an obligation compatible with a type of life that no longer exists. Doctors may continue to feel moral duty toward their fellows, but it will not be determined by whether their fellows *are members of the same local community or not.*

Some may contend that our report of the death of the local moral community is, like that of Mark Twain's, grossly exaggerated. Four lines of evidence can be brought forward to sustain this contention, but I believe that all four can be successfully countered.

First, one can point to the local government and to the public interest in it. The answer here is not to deny the fact but merely to assert that one is dealing in this case

with a different group from the old local community. This is the village or municipality as a political entity, a very different thing. A voter is by no means a whole person. He is expressing himself in relation to the necessary coercive order of the local community but is not participating in an all-round complex of life like a play group or a family. It was such a complex that the local community once was and is no longer.

Second, one can cite various neighborly manifestations in contemporary local communities. But these manifestations are either charities and the like—which again are specific groups with specialized purposes—or they are "circles" which by no means represent all population elements. Such circles may exercise some integrating effect upon their members, but they tend to be exclusive and to represent narrow, often intolerant and antisocietal, attitudes and points of view. Bridge-playing matrons are just as much examples of this phenomenon as a set of pool-room hangers-on.

A third objection might be that there exist some important expressions of community spirit which have nothing to do with the government, social agencies, or other such special forms. Community pageants, community orchestras and choruses, and community theaters might be cited. These are indeed evidences of common orientation, but they are quite atypical. Few communities possess them. The fact is that they have usually been established precisely in order to combat community disintegration. Realizing the trend of contemporary events, forward-looking citizens, bent on reversing the trend, have sponsored such community efforts. They rarely constitute anything that would be called an expression of a "natural" community.

The fourth line of evidence in support of the contention that the local community is not morally vestigial derives from the effect of daily newspapers. Many see in the "public" of our modern newspaper the existence of a

moral community—not, to be sure, the face-to-face community of former days, but a group that has the same spirit.

It is true that, because the individual's life is so largely a local matter, he feels the necessity of keeping up with the current of local events. A high percentage of all families will be found to be reading the local daily regularly. In so far as this reading keeps the residents in touch with one another and gives them insight into the lives of those on other social levels it perhaps develops fellow-feeling and promotes community integration. But any such effect must be very weak because the creation of common values is the work of a common life—intimate living together—not just knowing about one another. The smaller the community the more the press-developed unity tends to become real through common living, but in our large metropolitan centers the result must be largely good, but transitory, intentions. Even the community projects sometimes sponsored and successfully carried out by the local press do not necessarily prove the contrary. Such projects may be "put over" in a burst of public enthusiasm that leaves little lasting trace upon the members of the community. If it is a public swimming pool, for instance, they may very shortly begin disputing about its use by different elements of the population.

Any integration brought about by the press has a further serious defect. Because newspapers tend to represent the viewpoint and attitudes of a single class, the capitalist, any community unity that they bring about is inherently weak and unstable. It is probable that as other classes gain more conception of their position and realize the newspaper's one-sidedness they will reject unity so based as a pseudo integration and one that must be torn down before one representing the interests of all can be built up.

The evidence of capitalist bias in the press has been too well documented and is too well known to require its review here. Not only propagandists like Upton Sinclair but

careful students like Alfred M. Lee have come to the conclusion that our newspapers tend consistently to treat the news from the standpoint of the capitalist class.[1] It is not editorial policy that is here in question but the way of stating the news itself and the relative emphasis that is placed upon different news stories. Thus a strike is always given a big "play" even though it may be a small affair, whereas a lockout is "played down." And, if there are any traces of violent conduct among the strikers, such terms as "riot" creep into the account, although similar conduct upon the part of police in dispersing a peaceful meeting of strikers would call forth no equally opprobrious term. One need not assume that outright deception is often practiced as it was by the Pittsburgh papers during the 1919 steel strike;[2] the consistent coloring and emphasis from a particular standpoint is quite enough to give the public a distorted notion of the facts.

The reasons for such a policy on the part of newspapers are also well known. The owners are themselves capitalists and naturally see events from the standpoint of their class. And the chief support of the newspaper is its advertisers, a group composed largely of business men and their concerns. The protests or demands of any one advertiser can be ignored by a metropolitan daily, but if the whole group of advertisers is likely to be antagonized by absolutely unprejudiced reporting, the complete truth is often sacrificed. William Allen White has emphasized a third reason for the capitalist viewpoint of the newspaper.

> The American press is afflicted with the country club mind. It doesn't make much difference how much of a crusading Galahad a young publisher may be when he starts; by the time he begins to put his paper across he is taken up by the country club crowd, and when that happens

[1] Upton Sinclair, *The Brass Check* (Pasadena, Calif., 1920); Alfred McClung Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), pp. 427–472.

[2] Interchurch World Movement, *Public Opinion and the Steel Strike* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1921), pp. 132–140.

he is lost. He joins the country club, for that is our American badge of success. And before he knows it, he sees his community from the perspective of the country club porch, and he edits his paper to please the men who gather with him in the country club locker-room.[1]

It is naturally with respect to events growing out of class struggle, like strikes, that the greatest bias is in evidence. This policy is not necessarily condoned by the staff of the paper. The press room is usually unionized, and of late the reportorial staff is likely to be too. But so intricate is the mechanism of the modern newspaper that the product is finally controlled by a handful of editors and rewrite men at the top. The owners only have to make sure that their viewpoint is reflected in the actions of these men.

The community solidarity which is developed through the efforts of newspapers is therefore the kind that business men would naturally foster. Accepting a laissez-faire economic philosophy, they think of business prosperity as synonymous with community prosperity. Their community consciousness is of the "booster" type. We have already met it in the attitude of Chambers of Commerce and luncheon clubs. The assumption is that all will go well for members of the community if local business achieves and maintains a high level of profit; though often the latter goes with an "easy" labor market, which in turn means considerable unemployment. But the business man lives so completely in a world of balance sheets that he has become accustomed to substituting the counters of capitalism for life itself. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the two Middletown volumes of the Lynds.

It would be unfair, however, to omit mention of newspaper support of benevolent groups and in particular of Community Fund drives. One sees here the business point of view at its most unselfish—helping those who are

[1] Quoted in Paul Hutchinson, "What Makes Public Opinion," *Survey Graphic*, XXVIII (June, 1939), p. 376.

in dire want. No one who sees the enthusiasm such drives inspire can doubt that there is a strong strain of humanitarianism in the American business class. At the same time it emphasizes that our world is divided sharply in two—a business world where all is rational, impersonal, often exploitative, and a humanitarian world of kindly feeling and friendliness. In our system the two are kept wide apart. Community "we"-feeling can express itself in the latter sphere, but not in the former. Many employers will give to charities sums that they will not add to wages. It is against their business principles to pay more than the market price for labor.

It is quite natural that the "booster" type of community consciousness should have become suspect to members of the laboring classes, particularly since the beginning of the Great Depression. Some have even regarded it as an opiate to keep the masses from asserting their claims. Certain it is that in the modern urban community, with its self-conscious proletariat, this essentially external type of community integration will be less and less acceptable. If the local community is to be a moral community in the future, and it is doubtful whether it can be in a world of national markets, it will have to redevelop common values that are held by all classes and whose application in all areas of life, including business itself, is felt to be a matter of obligation.

Thus far we have been concerned to show that the local community is little more than a human aggregate, that it has not the unity of action under a directing will which characterizes those units we have called groups. It will now be in point to describe in a broad way the types of activity that go on within this rather hollow shell.

If we are right in believing that the local community is today more of an aggregate than a group and has lost its former moral power over the individual, does it follow that the actions of the individual within the community and aside from his participation in special groups are devoid

of all sense of responsibility? Is he a moral freebooter, so to speak, the only dampening influence upon whom is his fear of sanctions? Has he lost all sense of moral obligation to those whom he meets casually?

To ask such questions is to answer them. We have by no means reached such a stage of moral anarchy. The reasons why we have not are clear. The old "true" community was only one among a number of agencies that tended to instill a sense of social duty in its members. The state, the church, and the family are others that are still operative. Moreover, there is a survival of the old community in the moral standards of many who grew up under it and are still living.

Nevertheless it cannot be denied that there are powerful forces working in the direction of moral irresponsibility. The most important of these are the widening of the sphere of money transactions, the prevalence of mass behavior, and the ineffectiveness of sanctions.

Some theorists have emphasized the salutary influence of money upon social life. Simmel, for instance, has pointed out that only through money can men attain a wide range of choice in what goods and services they wish to receive and in what projects they wish to support.[1] Money exchange has undoubtedly meant the enrichment of personality by giving more facets to the individual life. Park has said, "it is with the expansion of the market, as a matter of fact, that intellectual life has prospered and local tribal cultures have been progressively integrated into that wider and more rational order we call civilization."[2] But these gains are on the side of individualism, not on that of integration.

The dark side of the picture emerges when we consider the effect of money on personal relations. It tends to

[1] *Philosophie des Geldes* (5th ed., Munich and Leipzig: Duncker und Humbolt, 1930), Chap. IV.

[2] Introduction to Everett Stonequist, *The Marginal Man* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. xiv.

maximize the element of rational calculation and to minimize the element of humane feeling. This trend toward impersonality has the effect of emptying business relations of all sense of duty. It has become a commonplace to say that breaking contracts and taking one's medicine in the way of paying damages is just as right as fulfilling them. Under this view legal sanctions have become merely elements in a complex equation, not the buttresses of moral principles. This attitude, it must be acknowledged, is largely confined to the dealings with one another of large corporations; it has not yet invaded the realm of the everyday transactions of the ordinary citizen. That the latter still feels moral scruples against coldly calculating business dealings speaks well for his training in the family and other intimate groups. Some might argue that such scruples merely reflect the desire for future trade, that they are part of business attitude, but it would be unduly cynical to suspect that "honesty is the best policy" was the only reason for such moral conduct. Most of us feel that *caveat emptor* is hardly a decent rule of dealing. But if we continue to subordinate all decisions to a computation in terms of money, we shall probably not feel so long. The moral influence of the home and the church is already declining. Our scruples cannot be expected to stand up much longer against a local community experience that is devoid of moral content.

Another effect of the increasing importance of money transactions is the tendency to translate all values into pecuniary ones. The "money-mindedness" of American society is proverbial and its effects demoralizing. The most fundamental values in life are not subject to pecuniary appraisal, and the attempt so to reduce them can only weaken their hold. An ever-widening sphere of life has been brought within the scope of the market, until it would seem as if many people think even of love in terms of dollars and cents. This marks the complete breakdown of the moral community and the complete victory of rational,

contractual relations. What is properly a means has become an end in itself.

Money-mindedness is closely related to the prevalence of mass behavior in our cities. Wirth has explained the process as follows:

> The fullest exploitation of the possibilities of the division of labor and mass production . . . is possible only with standardization of processes and products. A money economy goes hand in hand with such a system of production. Progressively as cities have developed upon a background of this system of production, the pecuniary nexus which implies the purchasability of services and things has displaced personal relations as the basis of association. Individuality under these circumstances must be replaced by categories. When large numbers have to make common use of facilities and institutions, an arrangement must be made to adjust the facilities and institutions to the needs of the average person rather than to those of particular individuals. The services of the public utilities, of the recreational, educational, and cultural institutions must be adjusted to mass requirements. Similarly, the cultural institutions, such as the schools, the movies, the radio, and the newspapers, by virtue of their mass clientele, must necessarily operate as leveling influences. The political process as it appears in urban life could not be understood without taking account of the mass appeals made through modern propaganda techniques.[1]

We may interpret the susceptibility of American society to the sweep of fashion as one aspect of this phenomenon of the mass dissociated from local culture. Fashion gives us a superficial sense of belonging, the need for which perhaps comes from the loss of the old community. But it gives us no roots, no real integration. An economist has written, "Consumers' demand at any given time is very homogeneous but it is subject to rapid changes which are difficult to predict just because they are not based on stable public opinion.[2] And again, "Modern advertising is an alternative to the organization of sentiment by society."[3]

[1] "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV (July, 1938), pp. 17–18.

[2] T. N. Whitehead, *Leadership in a Free Society* (Cambridge, 1936), p. 183.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 186.

The prevalence of all kinds of fads in our large cities is also significant as indicating loosely connected masses of men. The popularity of strange and exotic religious sects and movements and the ease with which anyone with an economic nostrum can attract a following are symptomatic. The quite rapid ebbs and flows of political tides also indicate that many persons have no deeply rooted convictions based on a stable set of values, but are persuaded by the last man they hear. "Self-government either in the economic, the political, or the cultural realm is under these circumstances reduced to a mere figure of speech, or, at best, is subject to the unstable equilibrium of pressure groups."[1]

A third factor in the demoralization of the local community experience is the weakened effect of the sanctions of public sentiment and law. We have said that a sense of moral obligation based on common values is always the primary method of social control and that sanctions are secondary; but when the primary source is weakened it becomes important that the secondary one be effective. Such appears not to be the case in our society, however. The weakening of moral community has been accompanied by a weakening in the effectiveness of sanctions. The anonymity of the large city is chiefly to blame. In the metropolis there is little neighborhood spirit, and the only groups beyond the family which impose any sanctions in the way of shame are the church and one's circle of friends. It is, however, not difficult to escape their scrutiny in the byways of the metropolis. Hence the frequenting of houses of prostitution, gambling dens, "low" dance halls and burlesque shows. People, and especially men, are able to "get away" with conduct that is contrary to the moral standards under which they grew up and to which they seek to hold their own children. It shows clearly that when the fear of sanctions is removed many members of the population possess too little moral conviction to hold them in line.

[1] Wirth, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

Probably some of the popularity of the moving pictures is attributable to this desire to escape the trammels of the accepted moral code. In darkened theaters where they are unrecognized, people can enjoy vicariously types of erotic and otherwise adventurous experiences which are denied them in the workaday world. There is no danger of neighborhood gossip or the censure of friends here. Men and women can give themselves up to the thrilling situations portrayed upon the screen without fear of social sanctions.[1] It is interesting to note that one of the older generation of sociologists wrote within two years of his death "I am impressed by a motion picture much as I might be by an opium joint. People pay and give themselves to sensuous dreaming."[2] An eminent psychiatrist has suggested that this may not be a bad thing if it drains off impulses that would otherwise be expressed in conduct.[3]

Mass behavior and the evasion of sanctions in our large cities can only be understood in terms of social unrest. People have been jarred loose from local cultures and groups and thrown into a wider field of experience. Their sense of frustration is too great if they live in the old way, and the new way is uncharted and unorganized. The masses are feeling vague new desires with reference to this larger sphere of life, but they are puzzled by the strangeness of the problems they face. They therefore respond with restless, individualistic behavior, which nevertheless may assume great importance when they all turn to the same objects of attention. It is probably only out of such behavior that a new moral order can evolve, but in the meantime the situation is amoral.

[1] See Herbert Blumer, "Moulding of Mass Behavior Through the Motion Picture," *Publication of the American Sociological Society*, XXIX, No. 3 (August, 1935), pp. 115–127.

[2] Charles Horton Cooley, Unpublished Journals, XXIII, (Aug. 22, 1927), p. 69.

[3] James S. Plant, *Personality and the Cultural Pattern* (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1937), pp. 154–155.

We conclude then that the way of life in the modern local community, and especially in the city, does nothing to reenforce common moral values elsewhere acquired. On the contrary it provides many opportunities for unstable mass behavior and for escaping the sanctions which violation of the mores ordinarily entails. Thus it not only does not furnish any sense of moral duty but tends to remove the prop of sanctions which, though a poor substitute for the sense of duty, still helps to hold society together.

CHAPTER XII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Our aim throughout this study has been to determine whether the multiplication of free-standing groups in our society gives grounds for the fears of societal disintegration that many have expressed. In trying to draw our results together we shall first indicate what appear to be the institutions of American society, then infer the common values that lie behind these institutions, and finally ask ourselves whether the differentiated groups we have considered are so related to the institutions and values as to preserve a smoothly functioning societal order.

It is in the field of government that the most obvious American institutions lie. The general frame of our government, as embodied in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the well-settled principles of our law constitute a structure that receives general, though perhaps largely unconscious, approval. It is in the mores. So also are many particular agencies like our courts, executive departments, and legislatures. Of central importance is our public school system. Perhaps more than anything else connected with government, it is a precipitation of our common values. We not only cannot conceive of abolishing it, we cannot even conceive that a movement aiming to abolish it could secure more than a handful of adherents. By no means all the elements of our governmental structure, however, are thus generally approved. Many of them, as we saw, are the subjects of violent disagreement and contention. But there are a sufficient number of approved elements to indicate that there is a broad foundation of common orientation supporting them.

Closely articulated with, though not a necessary part of, our governmental system is the political party. As the accepted mechanism for the discussion of public issues and the orderly administration of government, it also constitutes an institution.

The family is clearly institutional too. We have said that it is taken as the touchstone by which we judge the value of other types of relationship. Our deepest common values, those of loyalty, kindliness, parental, filial, and conjugal love, opportunity for self-expression, and honorable dealing find here their surest embodiment, their most frequent expression. If there is one part of our social structure that reflects a common orientation it is our belief in the central importance of the family.

Representing somewhat the same values on a broader scale are the character-building group, the social agency, the hospital, and the clinic. They appear to be looked upon by all classes as right and proper, for they receive large and broad voluntary support. They too must be regarded as institutional.

Our inquiry did not lead to any definite conclusion regarding such structures as the American Medical Association and the American Bar Association. They seemed to fall just short of full institutional status because, though generally approved, they are sometimes distrusted.

The first institution we encountered in our study consists of what we called the property principles of capitalism. The abstract system of investment for profit in a field of competitive enterprise has appealed to generations of Americans. We have envisioned a stable social order with its texture woven of such prudent individualism. There is support for such a view in a long line of eminent men from John Locke through Herbert Spencer to Herbert Hoover.

It is an extremely hazardous task to attempt to infer from these institutional structures the nature of the common values which, according to our theory, must lie behind

them. The values are very difficult of observation, and no one can be sure that what he states about them is true. We should not have dared to attempt the enumeration of such common ultimate values without approaching them indirectly through institutions. The necessity for such indirection is clearly implicit in Walter Lippmann's statement:

> Once all things were phases of a single destiny: the church, the state, the family, the school were means to the same end; the rights and duties of the individual in society, the rules of morality, the themes of art, and the teachings of science were all of them ways of revealing, of adumbrating, of applying the laws laid down in the divine constitution of the universe. In the modern world institutions are more or less independent, each serving its own proximate purpose, and our culture is really a collection of separate interests each sovereign within its own realm.[1]

Though the last remark seems extreme, the difficulty of finding the common values implicit in American culture is clear. If all institutions were expressions of a single set of common values, those values would be so obvious that one would not need to analyze the institutions to discover them. But, if there are more or less discrete values behind the different institutions, we are on safer ground to work through the institutions. There is still much risk of error, however. The chief controls upon undisciplined speculation are two. Since the common ultimate values behind different institutions cannot be too flagrantly incompatible with one another, we can check our results by comparing the inferences from one institution with those from others. And we can save ourselves from obvious missteps by considering tentative inferences in the light of American history and a general knowledge of American culture.

First of all there is what we have called the national quality. We conceive of the good life in terms of an American life. All the patriotism that is implicit in our loyalty to the national state and in our response to its symbols shows that we cherish our sense of being Americans. This

[1] *A Preface to Morals* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929) p. 112.

is more than a mere summation of other specific values which are striven for in our society, because there are other aspects to the sense of nationality than common orientation. We not only feel we are doing something together but that we have been somewhere together. There is a sense of common background and tradition, of attachment to a common soil.

But national feeling is also a factor in the definition of the more specific values in terms of which we wish to live. Many of the qualities of life that we want to enjoy in common are attributes of the *national* life. They are qualities that we are willing to share with Americans but not necessarily with others. We distrust outsiders and feel that they are not capable of participating satisfactorily in the good life which we are willing to see a common possession of Americans. Though this may appear to be a bar to international organization, and in its crudest form no doubt it is, there is no necessity that it should be, for international life may develop common values of a different sort and on a different level altogether.

One quality of this commonly desired American society appears to be a recognition of the dignity of the individual.[1]

> If one faith can be said to unite a great people, surely the ideal that holds us together beyond any other is our belief in the moral worth of the common man, whatever his race or religion. In this faith America was founded, to this faith have her poets and seers and statesmen and the unknown millions, generation after generation, devoted their lives.[2]

The utopias of which we dream always make provision for both personal freedom and personal responsibility. We are too much children of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the eighteenth century Enlightenment to think in any other way. The good society is not thought of as good in

[1] *Cf.* Gerald W. Johnson, "The American Way," *Harper's Monthly* CLXXVI (April, 1938), pp. 487–495.

[2] Felix Frankfurter, "The Immigrant in the United States," *Survey Graphic*, XXVIII (February, 1939), p. 148.

itself but good because it gives opportunity for personal development. Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in our adherence to the principle of religious freedom —a doctrine which is bound to introduce severe strains into a society.

The proof that the dignity of the individual is a common ultimate value of Americans, not just a high-sounding phrase, is found in the convergence at this point of several lines of inference from American institutions. Our approval of the family seems to involve a belief that each child is worthy and deserving of fostering care and guidance; our establishment of public schools, that every person can benefit from educational opportunity; our support of charities, that the suffering or handicapped individual has a right to that help which will secure for him a fair chance in life; our acquiescence in the property principles of capitalism, that each person deserves to enjoy the fruits of his own labor; our loyalty to a system of civil liberties and the democratic state, that the views of every normal adult are worthy of expression and discussion. One of these lines of evidence alone would be inadequate to the establishment of our proposition, but, taken together, they furnish strong support for the assertion that the dignity of the individual is a common ultimate value in our society.

Democracy appears to be a third characteristic of the collective life desired by all Americans. It follows almost inevitably from the second. "The assumption upon which the democratic ideal is founded is that human personality is sacred and therefore endowed with prerogatives that are inviolable. Democracy is a form of social organization that accepts the dignity of the individual as an act of faith."[1] Here again the institutions that we have discovered furnish evidence for the existence of the common value. Our loyalty to the democratic state, our acceptance of political parties, our jealousy of our civil rights—all

[1] American Youth Commission, *A Program of Action for American Youth* (Washington, 1939), p. 4.

point to a belief in democratic principles. In a roundabout way, our support of public education does too, for it is undertaken not only to give the individual opportunity but to furnish the state with intelligent citizens.

The democracy that we Americans believe in is, however, more than a political phenomenon. Our American family, for instance, is notoriously egalitarian as compared with the traditional family in Western culture. Our wives and children share to an unusual extent in the making of family decisions. Again, the growth of clubs and associations organized along democratic lines indicates the harmony of this principle with the American temper. It is almost certainly true, despite practices which conflict with the principle, that we believe that our people should have a share in making the rules under which they live.

A fourth common ultimate value seems to revolve around technological progress or the increasing command of man over nature. The good life we envisage is a life in which disciplined reason and scientific research will continue to give us new and better devices and instrumentalities. That this is an attitude typical of Americans may be inferred from several institutions. The property aspects of capitalism are supported partly because it is thought that they conduce to technological efficiency. Public higher education has been fostered partly in order to secure the continuous training of capable minds in the scientific and technical specialities which constitute the soil from which new developments spring. Even our civil liberties, though mainly a bulwark to democracy, have a motive of efficiency behind them; we wish to be certain that no new practical ideas will be suppressed by those in power. Although the point has not been made earlier in this study, one might argue that the organum of the natural sciences itself has something of an institutional quality. Where science has shown itself capable of prediction and control we trust it implicity. No society has been more willing than ours to support research and probably in none have

so many persons devoted themselves to the disciplined search for truth. This full acceptance of natural science is itself an indication of the value we put upon increasing the command over nature. We thus prove ourselves to be but the end products of the last five centuries of development in the Western world, centuries that have been marked by a growing degree of scientific rationality.

The point is perhaps proved in a converse manner by the slipping from institutional status of the church. It is probable that only in a society interested in technical efficiency, in the complex calculations of a money economy and the intricate theories of science could so large a proportion of the population ignore religious questions and religious values.

We must now come to grips with the central question of this whole study. Is the development of free-standing groups in our society a threat to the hold of American institutions and values upon our people? Has the emancipation of these groups from the local community tended toward societal disintegration?

Of the many types of groups we have discussed, only a few seem to be stimulating concern for the common welfare. The family still remains a source of "primary idealism." Though the church must also be reckoned as one of the nurseries of common orientation, it suffers from its general loss of influence in the modern world. The school does something, but not much more than stimulate a rather superficial patriotism. The state is probably more effective because of its appeal to the sense of nationality and the enthusiasm that its symbols evoke. Though the benevolent group must be regarded as vitalizing common values, it makes itself felt in the lives of relatively few. Finally, luncheon clubs, professional associations, cooperatives, and political parties sometimes foster common values, but their contribution in this direction is small.

This is not an impressive showing on the positive side. On the negative side we shall cite two lines of evidence.

First, the differentiation of groups has tended to emphasize noncommon goals of striving rather than common ones, so that the former are not so clearly subordinated to the latter as must be the case in a well-integrated society. This can be most clearly illustrated from our discussion of struggle groups. There it was shown that some of these groups do not operate within any institutional scheme at all and that those which do are likely to become undisciplined in times of stress. The same thing is less strikingly indicated with respect to clubs, which in general orient their members toward private or class, rather than public, objectives. One might argue that the extreme diversification of churches is also a threat to common orientation, because both clergy and laymen may be distracted from societal goals by their interest in the success of the particular denomination.

But the most convincing evidence of noncommon orientation comes to light in connection with the capitalist enterprise. For one thing, large-scale capitalism has tended to emphasize wealth in itself and the power derived therefrom as ultimate ends, because it has made possible the accumulation of capital on a scale never before deemed possible. These ends have often been sought so strenuously as to put into the background devotion to the common principles that are supposed to regulate the competition. Men have stooped to all sorts of underhand devices to gain their selfish ends. This they would not have done if the capitalist enterprise had not become emancipated from the moral control of the local community.

Large-scale capitalism has also introduced divergence of orientation between employer and employee. When enterprises were small, there was often considerable fellow-feeling throughout a store or factory. Personnel relations expressed common understanding and were informed with common objectives. This is now largely a thing of the past. But even more serious is the fact that employees have begun to lose confidence in the property principles of

capitalism too. The increased size of the enterprise has meant a larger and larger proportion of the population working for wages from which little is saved. Thus more and more persons are being cut off from participation in the capitalist spirit. Indeed these people are being brought into the position of regarding the capitalist spirit as a threat to them and their families. Some are beginning to believe, rightly or wrongly, that the more profit for investors the less wages for them. They may still believe in private property, but they do not feel that the drive to increase it without limit through investment is compatible with their picture of an ideal society.

Nor is the investor's attitude always at one with that of the management. He no longer thinks of saving and investing as a community service (as did his Puritan forbears), but as a source of private gain. Instead of regarding his activity as a healthy aspect of a stable collective life, he regards it as a means to selfish ends. This attitude is not lost upon other elements of the population who naturally begin to wonder whether a system given over to such rampant individualism is conducive to the general welfare.

We conclude then that, though investment with the hope of profit is still regarded as a legitimate feature of the good society by all kinds of Americans, it is the shrunken and precarious residue of a formerly more inclusive institution that has fallen upon hard days. As the property principles of capitalism work out in the family farm or the small store few find them suspect, but the disapprobation of the large capitalist enterprise has become so general that even the foundation stone of capitalism upon which it is reared is being critically examined. Thus the split between employer and employee, which until now has been largely a struggle within the system for its fruits, threatens to undermine the confidence of many in the moral basis of the system itself.

The second line of evidence is even more damaging to societal integration. It shows that, despite orientation in

terms of common values, there may be no agreement on objectives of common action. This seemingly paradoxical situation is due to the fact that some elements of the population are aware of failure to realize the common values, whereas other elements are not. Thus the poorer people regard certain aspects of their lives as incompatible with American values and support movements aiming to remedy matters. The richer people, not understanding the conditions out of which the movements come and thinking the programs unnecessary and unsound, bitterly oppose them. This is no mere disagreement concerning means to an accepted end. It is a disagreement with respect to the need of reform at all. One class has a definite objective—the remedying of a condition thought incompatible with basic American values; the other has no objective beyond preserving the *status quo*, and it is emotionally intense about that because of a sense of insecurity in a time of change.

The reason for such divergence in the interpretation of conditions is evidently the fact that social classes live in different worlds. People who dwell on Park Avenue do not and perhaps cannot have the same conception of the extent to which the dignity of the individual is being realized in New York as do sweated families of the Lower East Side. The fundamental difference is in the perception of the facts.

But, someone may ask, cannot this be cured by the processes of democratic discussion? Does such discussion not educate all to the facts of the situation? It would appear that it does not, and the reason is not far to seek. Discussion is suited to a situation where there is disagreement over means rather than ends. In such a case, exchange of views will often produce consensus and at least produces understanding of one another's positions. All are enlightened in the process, even though conflicting views are not fully reconciled, and societal integration is maintained. But when, as here, there is divergence in

objectives because of class-biased perceptions of the facts, discussion is likely to produce more heat than light. So long as the various classes perceive reality selectively and remain ignorant of one another's life conditions and the motivations that spring from those conditions, the existence of common values will be compatible with intense conflict in our society. Each side will charge the other with failure to believe in the American way of life.

All this is most obvious in the differential attitudes toward aspects of our economic organization. We have found that other aspects of life are fairly well ordered in terms of such institutions as the family, the school, and the democratic state. But in the field of economic relations there is only one rather shaky structure which is institutional—the system of property principles called capitalism. This leaves a tremendous area in dispute. Take the organization of labor, for instance. The right to organize and bargain collectively is regarded by most workers as a necessary corollary of the dignity of the individual. To many employers on the other hand the dignity of the individual suggests that each individual should confront the labor market alone. Labor organization is regarded by them as not only an infringement on the personal rights of employers but also on those of workers. This difference of view would not be disintegrative provided that, through the argument, fundamental objectives were analyzed. If both sides gradually came to understand what American values mean in terms of the life of the other fellow and why, the road to a peaceful solution would be open. Yet this particular divergence of view has been with us since the Civil War, and there are only a few indications that an educational process is taking place. Possibly one of the integrating effects of the Great Depression has been just here—in bringing more appreciation on the part of the well to do of life conditions among the poor and the unemployed. At any rate the only hope under these circumstances is that such appreciation will grow.

This is not to say that our common values are of no importance. They are of the utmost importance. They are the only threads which are holding us back from the brink of disaster. If our gravest problems are to be solved at all, they must be solved in terms of our common ultimate values. There is no other basis for adjustment. Indeed the danger is that in the struggle of opposing programs the loyalty to common values will be lost, that class struggle will degenerate into class war. Then men would come to deny the principles of human dignity and of democracy in the interest of programs aimed to benefit particular classes.

In general the picture is one of a differentiated society whose parts have become so disconnected that few organs speak in terms of the whole, and the words of those which do are subject to the special limitations that class isolation imposes. As a people we are losing our pragmatic, experimental approach to problems because we no longer see all around them. Twenty-five years ago Professor Cooley wrote:

> There is something that I vaguely think of as "discipline" that is greatly lacking in American life. It is a demeanor ordered by the sense of some large whole, some ideal that is not selfish or whimsical. It ought to give alertness, purpose and dignity to everything we do. . . .
>
> We ought all to try for it in our lives, and we ought to require it in the great institutions, the state and the school, as well as the army. Everyone should show training and should think and act with precision, alertness and vigor. Real deficiency in these things is simply disorganization. When we have an organic system of training, free in selection but stringent in function, reaching everybody, unified by a common spirit, we shall have the discipline we lack.[1]

All this is in contrast to the situation formerly prevailing. Because the American community of the mid-nineteenth century was smaller and acquaintance among members of different occupations greater than today, the welfare of the whole community bulked much larger in the total value scheme of the individual. Common ends and values were

[1] Unpublished Journals, XXI (Aug. 27, 1914), pp. 21–22.

emphasized more, and their importance was not dwarfed by such a large number of individualized ends and values. Also, because there was a much fuller understanding among all the people of the community, there were not the differences of perception and definition which we have discussed. There was more common orientation in the lives of our grandfathers than there is in ours, and the groups that must now be relied on to generate a sense of moral community are doing so very inadequately.

There does seem to be, then, some connection between the danger of societal disintegration and the rise of free-standing groups. The latter have disrupted an older type of moral community and have not been able to foster the development of an equally strong one of a new type. Of particular importance has been the large capitalist enterprise that has introduced a split between employer and employee which is spreading to many other aspects of our life. Because of it other types of groups tend to take on a class character. This accounts for the two shortcomings from the viewpoint of societal integration that we have noted: the tendency to emphasize noncommon interests, and the tendency to nullify common values through differences in perception of the existing situation.

It is clear that there are two tasks to be done by those who would preserve the integration of American society. One is to ensure the maintenance of our present stock of common values; the other is to foster understanding across class lines. Neither task is easy. The former is the one that is more likely to find popular support. Once our people realize that there is need for greater emphasis upon common values there will be movements to accomplish it. The danger is of course that these movements will take the form of selfish jingoism. It is always easy to create a superficial unity in a nation by arousing fear of impending attack from without. This has the dual disadvantage that the national cohesion thus engendered cannot be lasting—especially if the nation is well protected from foreign aggres-

sion—and that it makes participation in any sort of international order almost impossible. If we are to strengthen the hold of our common values it must be at a deeper and more humane level. We must work together not from fear of attack or hope of selfish national aggrandizement, but because we are proud of common aims and purposes that harmonize with a world order.

It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that greater emphasis on common values will alone assure the continued integration of American society. Of equal if not greater importance is the fostering of understanding across class lines. Only thus can our greatest problem—that of the distribution of goods and services—be solved without violence. Any attempt to maintain common orientation by propagandist nationalism without creating the conditions under which necessary economic readjustments can take place is doomed to failure. And yet there is grave danger that this will-o'-the-wisp will be followed.

> Under the stress of our emotional reaction against Nazi barbarism and our enthusiasm for the democratic crusade there is rising a school of patriotism which seeks to exorcise Fascism by religious incantations to democracy and Americanism. The radio and the screen have been fairly dripping recently with their excited and saccharine enthusiasm, and it needs little imagination to foresee its transformation into spy- and "slacker"-hunting hysteria. The effort to emphasize that the most faulty and limited democracy is vastly superior to the best regulated fascist states is an admirable one; but when this degenerates into a smug complacency about the American scene and ignores, for the sake of contrast, our own social injustices it defeats its own ends. In certain circles it has become almost un-American to mention the plight of our sharecroppers or our permanently unemployed—because Hitler has also mentioned such things.[1]

Such superficial jingoism merely hides for the moment the deep cracks in our societal structure. It does nothing to promote real understanding between classes, for it harps upon verbalizations of common values without ensuring any

[1] Lillian Symes, "Fascism for America—Threat or Scarehead" *Harper's Magazine*, CLXXIX (June, 1939), p. 42.

similarity of judgment with respect to how conditions measure up to those common values. It cannot mend our societal cracks, and, as a matter of fact, it serves to widen them because it diverts public attention and support from existing efforts to close them.

The lessening of the misunderstandings between classes is an extraordinarily difficult task. One is confronted with the operation of a vicious circle: differentials in the distribution of income and property make the classes unable to appreciate one another's positions, and this inability makes it impossible for them to agree on any measures that would reduce the differentials. It is easy to say, "Drastically reduce the income differences by legislation, and understanding will increase." The point is that you cannot do this without destroying our democracy. The attempt would either bring about a capitalist fascism or a working-class dictatorship. In this situation it appears that the only hope lies in approaching the problem by indirection.

Whatever increases the intimacy of association of different social classes encourages the understanding that is requisite as a basis for realizing our common values. The decentralization of our great industries so as to throw population back into smaller, more "natural" communities would certainly have this effect. There has been a hope among garden city enthusiasts and regional planners that increasing use of electrical power in factories would make such decentralization possible.[1] Perhaps the establishment of a compulsory labor service for young men and women of eighteen or nineteen, a service performed in camps where members of the different social classes would live together for a few months, would produce, even among city dwellers, the intimacy requisite for full understanding. Sometimes college life gives a similar opportunity, though usually not, because the students from different social strata tend to keep to themselves on the campus. Those

[1] For a careful examination of this whole question, see Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1938).

who have worked within the consumers' cooperative movement can testify that it also frequently affords the occasion for close acquaintance across class lines. All such developments, however, run counter to the main current of our life, that of diversification and stratification, and no one should expect them to have any marked effect in the near future.

A more immediate possibility is the reduction of friction and conflict without increased intimacy among classes, by securing more likeness of judgment with respect to the degree in which our common values are being realized under modern conditions. Children might perhaps receive instruction in school concerning contemporary social conditions and their compatibility with American values, although the effectiveness of this is likely to be weakened by after-school contacts which introduce divergent biases. Any thorough interchange of experience and views across class lines would tend toward similarity of perception and interpretation. One of the great benefits of collective bargaining is that, through it, employers and employees have the opportunity to become well acquainted over the conference table. And many charitable organizations are finding that a gratifying insight develops when well-to-do contributors and volunteer workers are brought into close contact with the underprivileged.

But in a society in which most needs can be satisfied with money, one cannot ignore the importance of lessening disparities of property and income as a means to similarity of interpretive position. We have indicated that such lessening cannot be achieved abruptly without running the danger of killing our democracy. Perhaps we can accomplish it gradually and alongside the cultivation of class understanding through other channels. Indeed something must be done in this direction if the cooperation of the working classes is to be secured. They will interpret the interest exhibited by the well-to-do classes in their problems as a pseudo interest and a sham unless positive meliorative

efforts come out of it. But once a start is made the gains should be cumulative. A reduction in property and income differentials should breed more understanding, and more understanding should bring into the area of discussion programs aiming at further reduction. Then members of different classes could argue intelligently and constructively over policies. No one expects that they would easily agree upon particular solutions, but they could at least canvass alternatives with mutual respect.

One must have no illusions that this will be easy to bring about. The line of least resistance would be to ignore the whole problem. In a country where the standards are as materialistic as in the United States, many will continue to regard improvement in technology as the main line of progress. They will not realize that such improvement does nothing to strengthen the foundations of our society. But we cannot leave them in ignorance. They must be brought to see that only increased common orientation can lead us to more societal integration. Though it is foolish to make predictions of imminent decline and fall, it is significant that more and more social scientists realize the danger. We are faced with the necessity of taking positive and vigorous action. The supreme test of democracy will be the promptness and the intelligence with which we meet this challenge.

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