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## YOUTH PROTEST IN NORTH AMERICA

BY

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### A Thesis

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: The proposed study deals with the

delineation of the processes under-

lying youth protest in contemporary North American society. As such it deals with youth discontent as a response to social and economic changes which have been indigenous to Western culture during the past century and especially the past decade. Protest is conceptualized as being primarily a middle-class phenomenon and directed toward the attainment of a sense of ultimate purpose and meaning. Conversely, discontent represents the youthful expression of the desire to alleviate a sense of boredom, obsolescence, and uselessness precipitated by the technocratic, secular society.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The problem to be analyzed is the scope and dimensions of youth protest in contemporary North American society. the observer of social behaviour, the past decade has represented an accentuation of the differences between generations. In an efficiency-oriented, technologically-based society, the young have experienced the pressures of a presumed need for early occupational certification; in a society where rapid social change and the concomitant erosion of traditional patterns of association and belief has become the norm, the young have been pressed into a prolonged search for identity The contradictions elicited by these tensions and meaning. have occasioned the young to search for hyprocrisy in their elders and at the same time has led them to question the entire moral fabric of society at large. In the United States, the critique of many prevailing institutions by young people has been accompanied by a vaguely democratic-socialist political ideology, a faith in participatory democracy, and a commitment to direct social action - the ultimate goal being the radical reform of American society, and the characteristic nature of human roles and relationships on which it rests. 1 The intense moralism of youth has received its impetus from civil rights and disarmament issues and has been especially suited to the young because their marginal, ambiguous position

<sup>1</sup> See Richard E. Peterson, "The Student Left in American Higher Education," <u>Daedalus</u>, Vol. 97, (Winter, 1968).

in the social structure renders them sensitive to moral inconsistencies, because the major framework of their experience (education) emphasizes the "ideal" aspects of the culture, and because their exclusion from adult responsibilities means that they are generally unrestrained by the institutional ties and commitments which normally function as a restraint on purely moral feeling. Bennett Berger suggests that the enlistment of the militant and moral predispositions of the young is consistent with the fact that the assumption of a strong "position" on moral issues requires little expertise or familiarity with arcane facts and that the moral fervour involved in taking such a position reflects America's traditional agegraded culture to the extent that it identifies virtue with "idealism", unspoiledness, and innocence, precisely the qualities adults tend to associate with the young. The social of the s

Since the intensification of moral sensibilities among the young tends to arise in modern societies in which the family has lost some of its importance as a socializing agency, 4 and consequently has experienced the reduction of its authority, the young have come to rely on each other for the

<sup>2</sup> Bennett Berger, "The New Stage of American Man - Almost Endless Adolescence," New York Times Magazine, (November 2, 1969), pp.32-33; 131-35.

<sup>3 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.131.

See S. N. Eisenstadt, "Archetypal Patterns of Youth," in Eric H. Erikson, Youth: Change and Challenge, (New York: Basic Books, 1963); David Matza, "Position and Behaviour Patterns of Youth," in R. Faris (ed.), Handbook of Modern Sociology, (Chicago:Rand, McNally & Co., 1965).

development of their attitudes and ideas. Their associations elicit a sense of commitment and purpose through the intimacy of their relationships. Nevertheless, in the absence of clearly defined guidelines for behaviour, they are likely to become confused and ambivalent in their values, goals, and expectations. The processes underlying modern societies tend to produce forces that undermine the stable value systems of a society to such an extent that there is a great deal of confusion until new patterns develop that are appropriate for the new situations. One of the most conspicuous features of modern societies lies in the extent to which patterns of orientation which the individual can be expected to take completely for granted disappear. The complexity of the influences which impinge upon him increase enormously; in many or most situations the society does not provide him with only one socially sanctioned definition of the situation and approved pattern of behaviour, but with a considerable number of possible alternatives, creating a state of ambiguity and uncertainty.4

Consequently, youth not only experience a sense of detachment from their families' and society's values, but feel socially useless in a social situation which has come to emphasize technique, rationality, and efficiency over genuinely humane concerns of morality and personal responsibility.

Many members of the middle-class generation have become bored, lonely, and confused - a direct consequence of their affluent

<sup>4</sup> Talcott Parsons, "Some Sociological Aspects of the Fascist Movements," Essays in Sociological Theory, (New York: Free Press, 1964).

social position. Protest then becomes one viable expression of their discontent. A concern with the critique of the ongoing cultural process has elicited a variety of responses for example, those who perceive a moral decadence in society have attempted to overcome their disenchantment through religious fundamentalism; for others, radical ideology represents a hope for the future and fulfills a need to understand complex problems by providing simple solutions; communal associations have become the means for transcending contemporary complexities for those who desire the injection of a sense of personalism and intimacy into their social relationships. By placing a premium on physical and psychological transcience, however, the youth counterculture faces the possibility of a continual turnover which largely eradicates the prospects of establishing a viable alternative to the dominant culture. As David French points out, if the counterculture has rejected grades, authority, and the nuclear family, it has thus carried over from the "straight" world psychological transcience (in the form of a movement from fad to fad, idea to idea, and cause to cause), the fragmentation of lives, immersion in abstractions, self-indulgence, and an atomistic version of individual growth. 6 As such, we may be able to discern an accentuation of youth's loss of meaning and direction and an inability to transcend their confused and ambivalent state.

David French, "After the Fall - What this Country Needs is a Good Counter Counterculture Culture," New York Times Magazine, (October 3, 1971), pp.20-36.

<sup>6 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.35.

On the one hand, the saliency of culturally-defined behaviour patterns serves as a guideline for structuring one's expectations and values in line with contemporary circumstances; on the other, commitment to radical and moral ideals serves as a directive for patterning behaviour. Whether this situation creates major contradictions in the life-styles and ideas of a committed youth counterculture will depend on the strength and importance of previous and contemporary associations.

As such, the first chapter will examine the major processes underlying age-group associations in the context of a rapidly changing industrial culture in order to assess the general nature of youth protest. The second chapter will be concerned with the delineation of the factors cross-cutting technological society and its implications in relation to youth protest. The third chapter will explore the major dimensions of generational discontent and the attempts of the young to extrapolate a sense of meaning and ultimate purpose from the social uni-In the following chapter, youth discontent will be analyzed against the background of the contemporary univer-The crucial question which concerns us in this chapter is as follows: Does the university function as a temporary storage area for a segment of the population society cannot accommodate elsewhere, or does it in fact provide a necessary resevoir of knowledge and skills for a young cohort to discover some sort of meaningful existence?

### 1: ALIENATION AND THE IMPACT OF AGE-GROUP MEMBERSHIP

The conflict of generations has been one of the enduring characteristics of human civilization. Our contemporary age, however, reflects an intensification of inter-generational rivalry, as revealed in the increasing visibility of youth groups in all forms of social and political protest. Youths' actions do not represent simply a revolt against traditional forms of authority such as those manifested in the family, but rest instead primarily upon a profound alienation from the parental generation and the social system which the older members of society ostensibly legitimize. The term alienation refers to a state of consciousness which can find a social order remote, incomprehensible, or fraudulent; beyond real hope or desire; inviting apathy, boredom, or even hostility. The individual not only feels detached from the social order; he has lost interest in being a part of it. For a constantly growing number of persons which includes, significantly, young persons of high school and college age, this state of alienation has become profoundly influential in both behaviour and thought.

In order to assess the extent of this condition of alienation among young people in our society, we must, first of all, explore the implications of the transition from youth to adult-hood. At each stage in this progression, the individual attains and uses specific biographical and intellectual capacities and

<sup>1</sup> Robert Nisbet, <u>The Quest For Community</u>, (New York:Oxford University Press, 1969), p.ix.

performs particular tasks and roles in relation to other members of society. As S. N. Eisenstadt notes, in every human society this biological process of transition through different age stages is subject to cultural definitions. becomes the basis for defining human beings, for the formulation of mutual relationships and activities, and for the differential allocation of social roles. 2 It is through learning and the acquisition of non-inheritable, biologically non-transmissable patterns of behaviour that the individual acquires a sense of identification with the real world and internalizes it as such. This process of socialization and learning necessarily involves a normative and evaluative element, and the demands made on the child throughout this process are made legitimate in terms of the differential evaluation of the adults' social experience as compared to that of the child. The adult is described as being more experienced, as a repository of the moral virtues toward which the child has to be educated. It is because of this that he has authority, that he commands respect and has to be obeyed.

Within the modern family unit, authority is reinforced by the conviction that social roles are related in a very specific way to their ascriptive, particularistic, and diffuse aspects. 4 In other words, the expectations accruing from a

<sup>2</sup> S. N. Eisenstadt, From Generation to Generation: Age Groups and Social Structure, (New York: Free Press, 1966), p.21.

<sup>3 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.27.

<sup>4</sup> See Talcott Parsons and E. Shils (eds.), <u>Towards a General</u>
<u>Theory of Action</u>, (1951); <u>Talcott Parsons</u>, <u>The Social</u>
<u>System</u>, (1951).

certain role suggest that behaviour is patterned in a special way towards other people according to their particular relation to the individual and that the performance of that role occupies a wide range of duties, as in father-son relations. In addition, the incumbent of a role is not judged by reference to his performance, efficiency, or achievement in any field, but rather to his position in the family unit. The main significance of these features of family life lie in the fact that they indicate the various types of social relations and activities which are combined within the family. It is the combination of these various activities that enables the family to perform its socializing function and to be a mainstay of social solidarity and continuity. Within the family the individual learns the various types of activities demanded of him as a full member of society.

One implication of this family organization, however, has been the difficulty faced in the transition from familial roles to adult roles based upon universalistic or achievement-oriented criteria, especially those which relate to the sphere of work. Conversely, an individual cannot achieve full status if he behaves, in his work, according to the ascriptive, particularistic orientations of family life. Owing to the long period of preparation, and segregation of the children's world from that of the adults', the main values of society are necessarily presented to the child and adolescent in a highly selective way, with "idealistic" emphasis (i.e., usually with emphasis on the common values and on community orientation),

and without a realistic relation to actual mechanisms of role allocation according to which they will have to achieve their status within society. The relative unreality of these values as presented to them becomes a focus of awareness among adolescents, and the exploration of the actual meaning of these values and of the reality of the social world becomes one of the adolescent's main problems.<sup>5</sup>

Consequently, as Eisenstadt argues, there arises a tendency towards age group relations directed towards the transference of identification and extension of solidarity from one set of relations to another, different one, structured according to different criteria. In this way, youth groups attempt to overcome the status ambiguity which accompanies the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

The formation of peer or youth groups, based upon this desire for emancipation from the limitations and restrictions of family authority, 6 involves as well the development of

- In this regard, see E. H. Erikson, Childhood and Society, (London:Routledge, 1950); M. Sherif and H. Cantril, The Psychology of Ego Involvement, (New York:Knopf, 1947); Kingsley Davis, "The Sociology of Parent-Youth Conflict," American Sociological Review, Vol.5, (1940).
- See Kingsley Davis, "Adolescence and the Social Structure,"

  The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science,

  (November, 1944). According to Lewis Feuer, the conflict

  of generations is liable to become particularly acute in

  circumstances when, for one reason or another, the sons

  have ceased to place any confidence in the wisdom and

  integrity of their fathers. Lewis Feuer, The Conflict of

  Generations: The Character and Significance of Student

  Movements, (New York: Basic Books, 1969).

a need for a new kind of interaction with other individuals which would make the transition to adulthood easier for the adolescent. It is within these groups that the dignity of his current attitudes and values will be affirmed and within which greater spontaneity of activities will be permitted. What is crucial for the status transition is the fact that he is judged by universalistic criteria, i.e., according to his own worth, rather than by his place within a given family or by reference to any specific achievement. Through participation in the group its members develop their identity and self-evaluation, and it is in terms of such evaluation that the common identification and solidarity of the group is evolved and maintained. This strong emphasis upon common experience, common values and mutual identification serves as the essential driving power for its individual members. It is this common characteristic that explains the fact that the nucleus of an age group organization is a small, usually face-to-face, primary group of peers with a strong sense of cohesion. Peer group associations, furthermore, are reinforced to the extent that their members are part of the same generation, thereby predisposing them to view the social universe from a particular perspective. Middle-class and workingclass peer groups, for example, share similar experiences insofar as they belong to the same generation. However, the formation of intragenerational association further defines the limits of their experiences, allowing the observer to conceptualize particular peer groups as being analytically distinct categories, especially when the class variable is taken into

consideration. Let us first examine the dimensions of generational or age-group associations.

Correlates of Generational, Peer Group, and Class Experience:

The fact of belonging to the same generation or age group, Karl Mannheim notes, endows the individuals sharing it with a common location in the social and historical process, and thereby limits them to a specific range of potential experience. This process in turn predisposes them to perceive and define the world around them in a specific, historically relevant manner and may also predispose them to act in ways meaningful only to their generational peers. Conversely, a large number of possible modes of thought, experience, feeling, and action are excluded and the range of self-expression open to the individual to certain circumscribed possibilities are restricted. Although youth groups generally display common characteristics in relation to their criteria of evaluation, their specific modes of self-expression may vary.

In order to explain this variance, we must take into consideration some notion of the class position of the individual (which directly relates to the socialization process). For any group of individuals sharing the same class position become predisposed toward perceiving society under the same aspect, familiarized by constantly repeated experience. Mannheim notes that the experiential, intellectual, and

<sup>7</sup> Karl Mannheim, "The Sociological Problem of Generations,"

Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, Paul Kecskemeti (ed.),

(London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952), p.291.

emotional data which are available to members of a certain society are not uniformly "given" to all of them; the fact is rather that each class has access to only one set of these data, restricted to one particular "aspect". In a complex social order, life styles are differentiated not only according to such dimensions as occupation, income, and prestige, but also include a subjective element - members of a particular class or social group have a sense of identity with one another, share common values and traditions, and have an awareness of unity and common purpose. Thus, the members of specific social classes appropriate only a fraction of the cultural heritage of their society, and that in the manner of their group.

Melvin Kohn has pointed out that class differences in parent-child relationships can be conceived as being a product of the differences in parental values which, in turn, stem from variations in the conditions of life, especially in the occupational sphere - middle-class occupations requiring a greater degree of self-direction, while working-class occupations, in larger measure, requiring that one follow explicit rules set down by someone in authority. As a result, as Alex Inkeles has noted, working-class parents attach far

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Melvin L. Kohn, "Social Class and Parent-Child Relation-ships: An Interpretation," American Journal of Sociology, Vol.65, (January, 1963), pp.471-480; Melvin L. Kohn, "Social Class and the Exercise of Parental Authority,"

American Sociological Review, Vol.24, (June, 1959), pp.352-366.

greater importance to obedience to parental commands than do middle-class parents. 10 In addition, few working-class parents expect (or even desire) their children to acquire a college education and the middle-class occupations for which a college degree is required. 11 Since the working-class adolescent is usually affiliated to a lesser degree with established institutional activities (such as the school) and is separated to a greater extent from the sphere of official organization, educational objectives tend to become de-valued. ically enough, however, the tension between adults and children of the working classes is smaller - or at least of a different kind - than that evinced among middle-class youth groups and youth culture. The working class, with its respect for authority, its emphasis upon stability, tradition, and familial loyalty, is able to maintain its legitimacy among adolescents which continues into maturity. 12

While there may exist many concrete tensions between parents and adolescents of working-class origins, even giving rise to running away from home for example, these tensions do not necessarily involve an ambivalent attitude

- 10 Alex Inkeles, "Industrial Man: The Relation of Status to Experience, Perception, and Value," American Journal of Sociology, Vol.66, (July, 1960), pp.20-21.
- 11 See Herbert H. Hyman, "The Value Systems of Different Classes: A Social Psychological Contribution to the Analysis of Stratification," in Reinhard Bendix and S. M. Lipset (eds.), Class, Status, and Power: A Reader in Social Stratification, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1966), pp.488-499.
- 12 See Gus Tyler, "Generation Gap or Gap Within a Generation,"

  <u>Dissent</u>, (April, 1971), pp.145-154.

towards the whole cultural world of the parents and does not necessarily define the life of youth and adolescents as entirely different from those of adults. In many ways the pattern of behaviour prevalent in these groups, such as an emphasis on various types of unorganized recreation, unplanned spending of money, earlier sexual experience, is to some extent a continuation of the pattern of adult life within these sectors; or at least there is a stronger emphasis on some of the patterns of behaviour accepted in the adult group, and not a distinctive opposition to it. 13

13 W. F. Whyte, Street Corner Society, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943); A. B. Shostak, Blue-Collar Life, (New York: Random House, 1969), Chapter 8. Similarly, in rural sectors family transition at adolescence is not as acute as in urban centers. The life of the adolescent is apt to run within the framework of his family unit or a similar unit, and the postponement of social maturity owing to a long period of preparation is neither a very acute nor a pressing problem. Consequently, there does not also arise the consciousness of specific age and youth problems, as in more modernized and urbanized See E. C. Hughes, French Canada in Transition, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965 ed.); H. Miner, St. Denis, A French Canadian Parish, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963 ed.); J. H. Kolb and E. S. Blunner, A Study of Rural Society, (New York: Harper, 1952); Maurice R. Stein, The Eclipse of Community, (New York: Harper & Row, 1960); Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, Small Town in Mass Society, (Garden City: Doubleday-Anchor, 1960).

Furthermore, it could be added that it is precisely this relationship between the anonymity and lonliness of an urbanized, industrial order and the intensification of inter-generational conflict which has occasioned the young to seek a sense of meaning and purpose.

Conversely, among many middle-class adolescents, the membership in a group, especially the family, which has involved deep-seated attachments and sentiments, cannot easily be abandoned without eliciting a sense of strain. 14 words, former members of a group previously significant to are likely to remain ambivalent, rather than wholly indifferent, toward it. The ambivalent ex-member has, R. K. Merton shows, a double orientation: toward finding some substitute group affiliation and toward coping with his earlier attachment to his former group. Thus there is a tendency for such individuals to become even more strongly attached to the new-found membership group than is the case for those born into the group, and correlatively, to become more hostile toward their former group than is the case among their new-found associates. 15 As Eisenstadt notes, this ambivalence expresses itself, on the one hand, in a striving to communicate with the adult world and receive its recognition; on the other hand, it accentuates the differences between adolescent and adult worlds, and predisposes the former toward opposition to the various roles allocated to them by adults. 16

- 14 See R. K. Merton, "Contributions to the Theory of Reference Group Behaviour (with A. S. Rossi)", Social Theory and Social Structure, (New York: Free Press, 1957), pp.279-334.
- 15 Ibid.
- out that this ambivalence has become extended into many of the technological aspects of the contemporary world the depersonalization of life, commercialism, bureaucratization, and conformity. Kenneth Keniston, Young Radicals, (New York: Harvest, 1968), p.282ff.

Middle-class youth, therefore, face a double dilemma.

Not only do they feel a sense of ambivalence in their associations with their generational peers but they also experience a strong sense of detachment from their parents' values and normative standards. This ambivalence and uncertainty is further accentuated in the context of the school, for the middle-class student often experiences a contradiction between the institutional norms of the school system and the informal behavioural norms of his age-group associations.

The School System and Middle-Class Youth:

The implications of the formation of youth groups with similar values, attitudes, and expectations are significantly revealed in relation to the educational process. As part of their normative structures, student sub-cultures introduce certain implicit notions concerning the rate and effort to be applied to the educational system as an unofficial code of behaviour, similar to that which Elton Mayo<sup>17</sup> discovered in certain work groups. E. C. Hughes, H. S. Becker, and B. Geer point out that it is not that the student must abide by these informal and hardly conscious agreements, but rather that they constrain his thinking and perspective almost without his being aware of it. <sup>18</sup> For instance, J. S. Coleman is his

<sup>17</sup> Elton Mayo, The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956).

<sup>18</sup> E. C. Hughes, H. S. Becker, and B. Geer, "Student Culture and Academic Effort," in R. R. Bell and H. R. Stub (eds.), <u>The Sociology of Education</u>, (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1968), p.378.

analysis of Chicago area high schools, discovered that associated with the implicit normative restraint of rate-busting was a low value on achievement and a high value on athletics. 19 These norms gain their strength from the fact that entering students are at the developmental stage when social acceptance assumes a certain priority, which results, as Christian Bay shows, in the de-valuation of intellectual incentives, i.e., the development of the powers of critical reflection and understanding. Insofar as students who believe that their future career prospects will depend heavily on skill in dealing with people or influential people (implicit in the athletic norm and student council activities), they will likely be found, Bay argues, exerting less academic and intellectual effort than those who believe that these incentives are highly instrumental to their long-range purposes. 20

In addition, it has been argued that conformity presents itself as a compelling motive for the convert who considers himself to be lost without a certain amount of group identification. The theoretically significant point, as Merton shows, is that he may become overly zealous in his conformity to the norms of the group because he considers himself to be on trial and wishes to ensure his acceptance. In the absence of close familiarity with the norms of his new-found group, he has no alternative but to make the official norms of his

<sup>19</sup> J. S. Coleman, "The Adolescent Society," in D. L. Phillips (ed.), Studies in American Society, (New York: Crowell, 1965).

<sup>20</sup> Christian Bay, "A Social Theory of Intellectual Development," in Bell and Stub, op. cit., p.351.

group the compelling guide to behaviour. 21

Combined with this emphasis upon group conformity has been the concomitant realization of the relative unreality of adult values. Owing to the long period of preparation, and segregation of the student's world from that of adults, societal values are idealistically presented to adolescents in the schools in a highly selective way (with emphasis on the common values and on community orientation, as Eisenstadt shows) without a realistic relation to the actual mechanisms of role allocation to which they will have to achieve their status within society. As a result, student disaffection may become manifest in a number of directions - cynicism, idealistic youth rebellion, deviant ideology and behaviour, 22 or

- 21 R. K. Merton, "Continuities in the Theory of Reference Groups and Social Structure," op. cit., p.352.
- 22 An important and prevalent type of youth group is the juvenile delinquent gang. The "gang" may originate either within the framework of ambivalent "youth cultures," or within some of the lower-class groups and is directed towards the open violation of the mores and norms of the society in which it operates. Juvenile delinquency is generally characterized by various types of aggressive behaviour, stealing, and pilfering - acts which may be directed towards adults as persons or towards social and cultural norms and symbols. See Herbert A. Bloch and F. T. Flynn, Delinquency: The Juvenile Offender in America Today, (New York: Random House, 1956); Albert K. Cohen, Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955); A. K. Cohen and James F. Short, Jr., "Research in Delinquent Subcultures," Journal of Social Issues, Vol.24, (1958); Richard A. Cloward and Lloyd E. Ohlin, Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960).

a gradual development of a balanced identity. <sup>23</sup> As mentioned above, the normative structure of the student sub-culture operates to alleviate these strains by incorporating values associated with athletics or sex for example, in order to channel adolescent self-expression in certain directions.

Christian Bay argues that from the point of view of university administrators the non-intellectual nature of this kind of normative behaviour has considerable advantages, particularly from the public relations point of view: these students are never politically radical and rarely even relatively liberal; on the contrary, they tend to be externally submissive to symbols of authority. 24 Conversely, there emerges another form of student self-expression, which Christopher Jencks and David Riesman describe as becoming increasingly anti-organizational in outlook and searching for spontaneity, informality and freedom from restraint. 25 Moreover, not only is the adult world of big business and bureaucracies rejected but also its traditional juvenile counterpart, the formally organized extracurricular activities. This dissociation may be expressed in non-participation in the various

<sup>23</sup> The development of a balanced identity implies simply an accommodation to the demands and exigencies of social or occupational life and the establishment of a degree of symmetry between the expectations and values of one's associates and the individual's own attitudes and values.

<sup>24</sup> Bay, op. cit., p.348.

<sup>25</sup> See Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, "The War between the Generations," The Academic Revolution, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), pp.28-60.

adult-sponsored agencies organized by the schools and/or the development of a somewhat subversive youth culture with an ambivalent attitude toward the adult world.

Thus, the student is torn between two alternatives: to enter the world of the adult on its own terms, or to remain a part of the student world until he can enter on his own The main test of conformity or deviancy of age groups, as Eisenstadt notes, is the extent to which the objects and roles chosen by age mates are appropriate and adequate for the fulfillment of their general social aspirations - to which the attainment of full, solidary participation in a group coincides with the roles allocated them by the authority centres of the society. Such harmony may also be defined as the extent to which the preparatory socialization effected in age groups is compatible with the main institutional patterns of symbols, norms and values of the social structure, and to which the transition from preparatory to fully institutionalized spheres is successfully effected. 26 Cohen and D. Hale show, it is difficult to enter the adult world on any terms but the given, precisely because it is difficult to formulate any other terms, any alternatives to the present, any "positive myths" about the future and how it should be faced. 27 If the student recoils immediately from this predicament and proceeds no further in his analysis, he becomes intent upon entering the adult world possessing the

<sup>26</sup> Eisenstadt, op. cit., p.275.

<sup>27</sup> M. Cohen and D. Hale (eds.), The New Student Left, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p.xxi.

advantages, i.e., status and occupational rewards, which a university education affords him. Another, more difficult alternative is rebellion but this too complicates the student's area of choice. In order to be successful in his revolt, he must detach himself from the adult community: consequently, rebellion often leads to the construction of a very personal, private, and highly individualistic world of vehement non-conformity and gratification - Playboy magazine affluence for the conventional; drugs and existentialism for the bohemian. 28

In short, the individual is left in the precarious position of substituting new patterns of experience into a comprehensively meaningful framework and overcoming the saliency of normative standards and values acquired through the process of socialization. Group associations become the basis of a new pattern of experience, reinforced by characteristically idiosyncratic behaviour patterns (for example, taking drugs, living communally, or wearing particular clothing.)

It is through these associations that middle-class students have attempted to discover a sense of ultimate purpose, meaning, and relevancy. At the same time, it has been a search couched in moral terms, for issues which are formulated within a moral framework are able to mobilize an awareness and interest which reinforces group communates and solidarity.

Students and Morality:

Student dissidents, considered to comprise a distinct

and highly unique sub-culture, are ostensibly attempting to formulate "positive myths" as an alternative moral basis for the legitimacy of existing societal values. As such their aim is not only to become valued members of a genuine intellectual and moral community, i.e., the university, but also to translate these ideals to include all men as valued members of an all-embracing moral community, ie., society.

According to Emile Durkheim, this concept of morality is intimately connected with the people practicing it in a particular social system. The connection is so intimate that, given the general character of the morality observed in a given society, "one can infer the nature of that society, the elements of its structure and the way it is organized. Tell me the marriage patterns, the morals dominating family life, and I will tell you the principal characteristics of its organization."<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, all moral behaviour, Durkheim notes, conforms to pre-established roles. The duties of the individual towards himself are, in reality, duties towards society. It is only, however, to the extent that we feel an identification with those different groups in which we are involved - family, political party, youth group - that morality itself is complete. It is membership in the social group that provides the indispensable context of mediation whereby ends become impersonal

<sup>29</sup> Emile Durkheim, Moral Education: A Study in the Theory and Application of the Sociology of Education, trans. by E. K. Wilson and H. Schnurer, (New York: Free Press, 1961), p.87.

ends endowed with the authority that alone makes a reality of discipline. Durkheim adds:

To act morally, it is not enough to respect discipline and to be committed to a group. Beyond this, and whether out of deference to a rule or devotion to a collective idea, we must have knowledge, as clear and complete an awareness as possible of the reasons for our conduct. This consciousness confers on our behaviour the autonomy that the public conscience requires of every genuinely and completely moral being. Hence, we can say that the third element of morality, besides the spirit of discipline and the ends of morality, is the understanding of it. 30

Morality, The Family, and Social Change:

It is precisely the absence of this moral element which has characterized the institutional structure of modern society and has led the contemporary generation of disaffected youth into various forms of social apathy and estrangement from certain collective values of the older generation. Within the family, inparticular, the increasing emphasis upon "permissiveness" has in many cases failed to equip the young with adequate moral and intellectual standards. 31 R. A. Nisbet

- Tradition, (New York: Basic Books, 1966), Chapter 3.
- See Barrington Moore Jr., "Thoughts on the Future of the Family," and "Reflections on Conformity in Industrial Society," Political Power and Social Theory, (New York: Harper, 1965), pp.160-178; 179-196. For an analysis of the changes in middle-class child-rearing techniques toward permissiveness, see Urie Bronfenbrenner, "Social-ization and Social Class through Time and Space," in E. E. Maccoby, T. Newcomb, and E. Hartlety, (eds.), Readings in Social Psychology, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1958).

considers this change in the modern family as an erosion of its natural authority, the consequence, in considerable part, of the absorption of its functions by other bodies, chiefly the state. 32 Nisbet adds:

In contemporary society, the family, especially the middle-class family, not only has lost its authority, but has also forfeited its moral significance. As Theodore Roszak notes, this change has been combined with a prolongation of infancy among those adolescents who have experienced a permissive atmosphere in the family, which has not only resulted in a marked disrespect for discipline but has also accentuated the differences between generations. Our high consumption, leisure-oriented society, he adds, has further reduced the possibility of responsibility among the young by extending the period of training in order to fill the occupations demanded by our technocratic culture.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Robert Nisbet, The Quest for Community, op. cit., p.xiv.

<sup>33 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.xiii.

Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture, (Garden City: Anchor, 1969). See also Bennett Berger, "The New Stage of American Man - Almost Endless Adolescence," New York Times Magazine, (November 2, 1969), pp.32-33; 131-35.

During periods of rapid social change, as Kingsley Davis has pointed out, the "parent-adolescent" conflict becomes intensified. He argues that society offers, as it were, many opportunities beyond the stable status aspirations of the family. The potential discrepancy which exists in all modern societies is maximized, thus giving rise to intensified conflict between generations. 35 Our age, however, is one which considers change to be self-justifying, often regardless of whether the status quo has been proven inadequate. Adults are often obsolescent in their skills, trained for occupations that are passing out of existence, and thus unable to transmit directly their accumulated knowledge. Consequently, youth is facing an adult world which is neither a coherent reservoir of models, guides, and supports, nor is it free to stand detached, allowing youth to identify with any one sector of the adult world against another. 36

This adult world, according to Charles Reich, 37 is characterized by a profound schizophrenia - a split between the individual's working and private self. This separation into two roles, two sets of values has occasioned a subjection to outside standards and forms of manipulation. The individual, furthermore, has been persuaded that the richness, the satisfactions, the joy of life, are to be found in power, success, status, acceptance, popularity, achievements, rewards,

<sup>35</sup> Kingsley Davis, "Adolescence and the Social Structure", op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> Kaspar Naegele, "Youth and Society: Some Observations," Daedalus, Vol.91, No.1, (Winter, 1962), p.63.

<sup>37</sup> Charles Reich, The Greening of America, (New York: Bantam, 1971).

and the rational, competent mind. As Reich adds: "He wants nothing to do with dread, awe, wonder mystery, accidents, failure, helplessness, magic. He has been deprived of the search for self that only these experiences make possible. And he has produced a society that is the image of his own alienation and impoverishment."

It is within this context that the analysis of generational disaffection has taken its roots. Contemporary youth have become alienated from their parents, their school, and their society. The formation of youth groups demonstrates the need for association - the exigencies of modern life, however, have necessitated the establishment of new forms of association which are relevant to contemporary life and thought. It is precisely on this basis that the attempts by the young to overcome the problems generated by modern society will be examined. In particular, the next chapter will explore the consequences of bureaucratization, rationalization, and organization in the development of youth protest.

### 2: YOUTH PROTEST AND THE CORPORATE STATE

The Protestant Ethic and the Economically Self-Sufficient Man:

The corporate state, the source of criticism and revulsion by the contemporary youth generation, owes its historical and philosophical origins to the ideology of individual economic enterprise. This traditional Western definition of culture, which Charles Reich refers to as "Consciousness I", was embodied in the outlooks of the farmer, the small businessman, and the worker trying to get ahead. In essence this particular conception was fashioned by a belief in the sovereignty, freedom, and equality of men. The individual self as the source of his own achievement and fulfill ment was combined with a notion of hard work, diligence, thrift, sobriety, and prudence, which produced a man responsible to himself but at the same time responsible to the nation as a whole. Max Weber for one noticed the concomitant rise of the rational organization of free labour emphasizing order and discipline with the emergence of the religious ethic of Protestantism.2 It is through Weber's analysis of the capacities of different religions to legitimize, in religious or ideological terms, the development of new motivations, activities, and institutions which were not encompassed by their original impulses

<sup>1</sup> Charles Reich, <u>The Greening of America</u>, (New York: Bantam, 1971), pp.20-42. See also David Riesman, <u>The Lonely Crowd</u>, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950).

<sup>2</sup> Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. by Talcott Parsons, (New York: Scribner, 1958).

and views, that we begin to understand the impact of Protestantism upon the character of this economically self-sufficient For the Protestant ethic, with its emphasis upon the combination of "this-worldliness" and asceticism, oriented individuals toward activities of this world but at the same time did not ritually sanctify them - either through a mystic union or ritual activity - as final proofs of religious consummation or worthiness. Along with the emphasis on individual activism and responsibility, the basic religious and ethical outlook of Protestantism also concerned the relationship of the individual to the sacred and to the sacred trad-This relationship, while strongly emphasizing the ition. importance and relevance of the sacred tradition, at the same time minimized the extent to which individual commitment was mediated by a textual exegesis, institution, or organization. As a result, the possibility appeared of continuous redefinition and reformulation of the nature and scope of such a tradition.

The core of Weber's thesis on ascetic Protestantism, as distinct from his discussion of the wider effects of the Protestant religion, is contained in his analysis of the development of the role of the economic entrepreneur, the new type of labour, and the specific setting in which this role could become institutionalized. As Eisenstadt points out, the potential of Protestantism to develop new motivations

S. N. Eisenstadt, "The Protestant Ethic in an Analytical and Comparative Framework," S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), The Protestant Ethic and Modernization, (New York:Basic Books, 1968), pp.10-11.

and activities had at least three specific economic effects in terms of role development. First was the definition of new economic roles and new economic goals and collectivities not tied to existing economic and political frameworks. Second was the provision of broader institutional, organizational, and legal normative settings which gave the new roles both legitimacy and the necessary resources and frameworks with which their continuous operation was facilitated. Last was the development of new types of motivation for the understanding of such roles and for identifying with them. In effect, these changes presupposed an advancement in the direction of a more secular and modernized type of social system based on a specialization of roles. In turn, secularization can be conceptualized as referring to the more universal and necessary conditions for the existence of a modern industrial society.

Systematic inquiry into the natural world, the development of canons of scientific procedure, and the institutionalization of scientific discourse in intellectual life were among the decisive sources of secularization. Modern science itself had religious roots.<sup>5</sup> The Calvinist notion of the

<sup>4 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.13.

Theory and Social Structure, (New York: Free Press, 1957), pp.574-606. In denying the viability of this argument, Lewis Feuer has pointed out that the scientific intellectual was not a Protestant ascetic, as Merton would have it, but rather a person for whom science was a "new philosophy" - a third force rising above religious and political hatreds, seeking the world of nature with liberated vision and intending to use and enjoy its knowledge. Lewis Feuer, The Scientific Intellectual, (New York: Basic Books, 1963), esp. pp.68-82.

autonomy of the world has been depicted by Weber as a source of the process termed rationalization. This entailed the increasing penetration of all spheres of culture by criteria of rational calculation and predictability. The cultural precondition for our bureaucratized social organization, the concept of rationalization was specifically related with the notions of the propriety and possibility of scientific investigation and technological innovation.

Related to this growth in rationality was the concomitant emphasis on "elective action". This was based on a prescription for individual choice as an affirmation of liberty (and the responsibility for the exercise of this liberty). As a value sustained by the particular culture, individual choice was related in a very specific way to the underlying ideological process. For instance, public opinion, as expressed in liberal rationalist thought, presupposes the existence of an accommodation of individual wills, each individual supposedly deliberating and deciding as such. particular, this orientation assumes an inseparable connection between freedom and choice and that the individual be relatively immune from outside pressure or manipulation. As Irving Kristol points out, the preservation of this notion in a democratic order is inextricably bound to the maintenance of a responsible elite. 7 By contrast, as George Grant has argued,

<sup>6</sup> Gino Germani, "Secularization, Modernization, and Economic Development," in Eisenstadt, op. cit., p.347.

<sup>7</sup> Irving Kristol, "Pornography, Obscenity, and the Case for Censorship," New York Times Magazine, (March 28, 1971), p.113.

the elimination of all traditional guides to action in modern society has resulted in the availability of the average citizen for manipulation and coercion by an elite committed to maximizing self-interest and not to preserving the good, which is synonomous with predictability, individuality, and order. 8

Combined with this notion of choice based on some type of rationality as a criteria for the development of modern society was an increasingly accentuated differentiation of function in the institutional spheres of society. The conomy in this instance assumed particular importance and created its own organization. As Germani points out, the increasing specialization and differentiation of corresponding normative spheres, tended to give rise as well to a plurality of value systems (insofar as they were also adaptable to institutional specialization). Each institutional sphere tended to acquire autonomy of values. For instance, in the economic sphere specifically, the process of secularization signified, first, the differentiation of specifically economic institutions — that is, those organized on the basis of norms and values free

<sup>8</sup> George Grant, Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian Nationalism, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965).

See also C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), esp. pp.298-324; G. William Domhoff, Who Rules America?, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967); Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, Vol.II, (New York: Vintage, 1954) who anticipated the transformation of public into mass. (pp.265-278).

<sup>9</sup> Germani, <u>op. cit</u>., p.351.

from connotations of religion, morality, aesthetics, or prestige, and generally oriented toward the demand of efficiency - incorporating instrumental rationality as a basic principle of action and the institutionalization of change. This implied that forms of property, exchange, the division of labour and its organization, distribution and the allocation of human and material resources to different sectors of the population were oriented toward the principles of efficiency and rationality and all its consequences (for example, bureaucratic organization). 10

The social and political convulsions of the turn of the century, which culminated in the First World War, did much to accelerate the processes of change. As Norman Birnbaum notes, behind these convulsions a long-term tendency was altering the structure of culture itself.

As science and applied science occupied ever new areas of culture and society, the scientific enterprise lost its internal coherence. The precondition for the mastery of one discipline, or subdiscipline, became a renunciation of universality, not (as hitherto) its incorporation or expression in specialized scientific activity. The intellectual division of labour corresponded to the division of labour elsewhere in the productive system; it progressed and is progressing indefinitely, with no end in sight. As specialization became the characteristic of legitimate intellectual activity, an implicit renunciation of the claim that the whole of culture and society could be rationally apprehended emerged as a logical and psychological consequence. This process in culture, precisely as with the previous integration

of culture and society, had structural bases in the movement of society itself. 11

The Emergence of Technocracy and Bureaucratization:

The epoch of the self-sufficient individual was thus coming to an end. The accumulation of productive forces, the necessity to co-ordinate an increasingly complex social and economic fabric, the sheer administrative imperatives implicit in the vast quantitative increase in populations, rendered this self-sufficient man obsolete. The market itself developed into a far more organized and differentiated structure within which the individual could not so easily move; concentrations of impersonal property became more important than individual property accumulation, and the very notion of a career altered. 12 Whereas the earlier stage of industrialization had presumed the individualistic and autonomous nature of career selection, the emergence of technocracy issued a decline in the area of choice and the selection of careers was specifically determined by its relevance to the technological imperative. In brief, the age of bureaucratization was at hand.

In Weberian terms, the process of bureaucratization implies a form of administrative organization which, from a purely technical point of view, is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency and is in this sense formally the most rational means of carrying out imperative control over human

<sup>11</sup> Norman Birnbaum, The Crisis of Industrial Society,
(New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp.110-111.

<sup>12 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.111.

beings. It thus makes possible a particularly high degree of calculability of results for the heads of the organization and for those acting in relation to it. In addition, it is superior both in intensive efficiency and in the scope of its operations, and is formally capable of application to all kinds of administrative tasks. As Weber notes, the primary source of the superiority of bureaucratic administration lies in the role of technical knowledge which, through the development of modern technology and business methods in the production of goods, has become completely indispensable. This is the feature of it which makes it specifically rat-This consists on the one hand in technical knowledge which, by itself, is sufficient to ensure it a position of extraordinary power. But in addition to this, bureaucratic organizations, or the holders of power who make use of them, have the tendency to increase their power still further by the knowledge growing out of experience in the service. For they acquire through the conduct of office a special knowledge of facts and have available a store of documentary material peculiar to themselves. 13

As a result of the process of bureaucratization, the mastery of culture no longer entails an individual performance but incorporation in a highly sequential and defined career sequence. The mastery of nature and society, once the mark of a self-confident bourgeoisie, was transmuted into the

<sup>13</sup> Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, ed. by Talcott Parsons, (New York: Free Press, 1969), pp.337-339.

instrumentalization of knowledge as the bourgeoisie disappeared, to be replaced gradually by the forerunners of contemporary society's technical intelligentsia and technocratic These elites, as Weber shows, are the only individuals capable of maintaining at least relative immunity from subjection to the control of rational bureaucratic knowledge. 14 Conversely, the rest of the population tend to be organized in large-scale corporate groups which are inevitably subject to bureaucratic control. Culture itself, along with a system of symbols, of consciousness, of sensibility, of preconscious and unconscious meanings, has been assimilated to the imperatives of machine production, market organization, and bureaucratic power. Our contemporary age reflects an era of social engineering in which entrepreneurial talent broadens its province to orchestrate the tdal human context which surrounds the industrial complex. As Jacques Ellul has pointed out, technique prevails over the human species in such a way that human autonomy and caprice becomes obsolete in the face of technical necessity. 15 John Kenneth Galbraith as well has noted that the imperatives of technology and organization are what determine the shape of economic society. 16

The cultural implications of the indispensable role of technology in the production process which led to the formation

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.339.

<sup>15</sup> Jacques Ellul, <u>The Technological Society</u>, (New York: Vintage, 1967).

<sup>16</sup> John Kenneth Galbraith, <u>The New Industrial State</u>, (New York: Signet, 1967).

and gradual enlargement of this technically educated group are as follows:

. . . this was a continuation of the relentless progression of science and a scientific world view. . . . Some, like the Saint-Simonians (and in more subtle ways, the utilitarians in England), supposed that all of society could be reorganized on scientific principles, and directed in effect by social technologists. This "scientistic" programme constituted an industrial utopia, but in fact its realization has proven impossible. The comportment of the technologists suggested a remarkable compartmentalization in their personal culture. were (and are) quite capable of applying technology in the production process, while accepting the multiple irrationalities of the larger society and its culture. Indeed, the institutionalization of science and technology heightened those irrationalities, by releasing forces which few could comprehend and almost none con-This led in turn to the split between science and humanistic culture. . . . The active component of culture, altering nature and society, has been allocated to science and technology. The meaningful one, the human self-interpretation which alone could make sense of this activity has been ascribed to those devoid of any practical competence. 17

As a result of the process of the industrialization of culture, models of comportment, standards of judgment, and forms of organization derived from the pursuit of the mastery of human and non-human nature were imposed upon cultural activity. As George Grant notes, the goal of modern moral striving - the building of free and equal human beings - has led inevitably back to a trust in technology. The unfolding of modern society has not only required the criticism of all

<sup>17</sup> Birnbaum, op. cit., pp.131-132.

older standards of human excellence, but has also at its heart the trust in the overcoming of chance which leads us back to judge every human situation as being sdvable in terms of technology. As moderns we have no standards by which to judge particular techniques, except standards welling up with our faith in technical expansion. All forms of human activity, devested of their ethical significance, receive their impetus from the technical imperative. For instance, the concept of work, considered by Daniel Bell and Sigmund Freud as the chief means of binding an individual to reality, has now become organized on the basis of consumer reward, although for some it still leads to a degree of individual self-esteem.

Combined with this transformation in the traditional definitions of work has been a change in the division of labour.

Durkheim's analysis of the division of labour includes the
distinction between mechanical and organic solidarity. Mechanical
solidarity is associated with the pre-industrial, small, homogen-

- 18 George Grant, "In Defence of North America," <u>Technology</u> and Empire, (Toronto: Anansi, 1969), p.34.
- 19 See Gus Tyler, "Generation Gap or Gap Within a Generation,"

  <u>Dissent</u>, (April, 1971), p.150. For an analysis of the
  relationship between work and self-esteem, see E. C. Hughes,
  "Work and the Self," in J. Rohrer and M. Sherif (eds.),

  <u>Social Psychology at the Crossroads</u>, (New York: Harper,
  1951); H. L. Wilensky, "Varieties of Work Experience,"
  in H. Borow (ed.), <u>Man in a World of Work</u>, (Boston:
  Houghton Mufflin, 1964); W. A. Faunce, <u>Problems of</u>
  an Industrial Society, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1956).

ious type of society characterized by a system of shared beliefs and values which produce a common set of norms affecting all members. Positions are ascribed and prestige-rankings are formalized. Organic solidarity is associated with the industrial, large-scale, heterogeneous type of society in which the diversity of the members of society (both their beliefs and social functions) is characterized by a relatively open system in which individuals achieve their positions and where codes of conduct are based on reconciling conflicting interests. 20 The increasing complexity of culture, its impenetrability as a whole, the length of time required for mastery of any of its segments, the imposition upon culture of standards of efficiency or profitability derived directly from the market, have resulted in a fragmentation of the cultural labour force. As Birnbaum points out, the cultural division of labour has proceeded in two ways. Horizontal distinctions separate those with equal access to culture. are often enough distinctions of function: engineers and scientists, lawyers and philosophers, shape symbols and materials which are used with different degrees of comprehension by their publics. Here, important differences of power and influence intrude. Some work for publics, who are free to accept or reject particular instances of culture which are more or less autonomously conceived and produced. Others, now in the majority, work for employers who dictate conception and production alike. Meanwhile, vertical distinctions of an extreme kind constitute a cultural stratification of

<sup>20</sup> Emile Durkheim, <u>The Division of Labour in Society</u>, trans. by George Simpson, (New York: Free Press, 1969).

the population. Differences in wealth, income, and occupation are most commonly expressed through differences in education. <sup>21</sup> Social Implications of Technocracy:

Among the specific social effects of the process of technological development have been the profound isolation of the individual and the relative neglect of unconscious, invisible, and non-material human values. William H. Whyte, for instance, attributes the emergence of the dominating organization mainly to the decline of the Protestant Ethic, which, as we have seen, stressed personal independence as well as thrift, prudence, and other virtues which were useful in helping people make and save money. According to Whyte, this style of life has been replaced by the Social Ethic, the belief that the group is the source of creativity, that the individual has a basic need to "belong", and that "belonging" can be achieved by the application of science. 22 Where the Protestant

<sup>21</sup> Birnbaum, op. cit., p.133.

W. H. Whyte Jr., The Organization Man, (Garden City:Anchor, 1957). Whyte defines the Social Ethic as follows: "That contemporary body of thought which makes morally legitimate the pressures of society against the individual. Its major propositions are three: a belief in the group as the source of creativity; a belief in 'belongingness' as the ultimate need of the individual, and a belief in the application of science to achieve the belongingness." (p.7). David Riesman has identified this proclivity in terms of the concept of "other-directedness" with its mode of sensitivity to others. Riesman, The Lonely Crowd, op. cit. In addition, see Charles Reich, op. cit., pp.62-91, for his analysis of the corporate mentality of "Consciousness II".

Ethic culminated in emphasizing the sacredness of the individual, the newer Social Ethic culminates in justifying pressure on the individual by the group. 23

Concomitant with this emergence of a Social Ethic has been an erosion of traditions of community which insisted upon visibility and public accountability in all social life. The German sociologist F. Tonnies called attention to the processes of modern history that have led to an atomization or mechanization of primary social relationships. Tonnies expressed this as a continuous weakening of the ties of Gemeinschaft - the communal ties of family, gild, and village and a constant maximization in modern times of the more impersonal, atomistic, and mechanical relationships of what he called Gesellschaft. 24 Georg Simmel as well dealt extensively with the depersonalizing influence upon traditional moral and social patterns of the modern diffusion of money as a dominant means of exchange. Because of the easy convertibility of all qualitative values and status relationships into fluid relationships of contract, based upon money, modern capitalism has had a leveling and fragmenting effect upon the context

- 23 Crosscutting the above writers' concern for the isolation of the individual was nonetheless a belief that a more efficiently managed economy could be achieved a belief which received its impetus from the optimism engendered in the "New Deal" era.
- 24 R. Heberle, "The Sociological System of Ferdinand Tonnies:
  'Community' and 'Society'," in H. E. Barnes (ed.), An
  Introduction to the History of Sociology, (Chicago:
  University of Chicago Press, 1948).

of status and membership.<sup>25</sup> In addition, Durkheim has noted the atomizing effects upon society of such forces as technology and the division of labour. One of the primary characteristics of development, Durkheim pointed out, was the successive destruction of all the established social contexts.<sup>26</sup>

In effect, the problem centres on the decline in functional and psychological significance of such groups as the family, the small local community, and the various other traditional relationships that have mediated between the individual and his society. Other and more powerful forms of association have existed, but the major moral and psychological influences on the individual's life have emanated from the family and local community and the church. Within such groups have been engendered the primary types of identification: affection, friendship, prestige, recognition. Within them also have been intensified the principal incentives of work, love, prayer, and devotion to freedom and order. The critique of organized society concerns the role of the prim-

<sup>25</sup> Kurt Wolff (ed.), <u>The Sociology of Georg Simmel</u>, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1950), p.293.

<sup>26</sup> Emile Durkheim, <u>Suicide</u>, trans. by G. Simpson, (New York: Free Press, 1966).

<sup>27</sup> Robert Nisbet, The Quest for Community, (New York:Oxford University Press, 1969), p.50. M. R. Stein, in attempting to formulate a theory of community life, as well has pointed out in his analysis the social dislocations occasioned by the specific form of industrialization that transformed American community life around the turn of the century. Maurice R. Stein, The Eclipse of Community, (New York:Harper, 1960). In addition, see Charles Reich, op. cit., p.42.

ary social group in an economy and political order whose principal ends have come to be structured in such a way that the primary social relationships are increasingly functionless, almost irrelevant, with respect to these ends.

Associated with the absence of meaning for the individual which becomes the moral background of vague and impotent reactions against technology and science, is a growing sense of isolation in the sense of meaningful proximity to the major ends and purposes of his culture. With the relatively complete satisfaction of consumer needs comes a different order of needs - the need for social status. These statuses, both in the private and public sectors, achieve their greatest importance because they become for most individuals the chief goals of life. 28 This desire for status, as C. Wright Mills has shown, has become the content of the individual's relationship to culture which has shaped and manipulated him to its alien ends. For security's sake he must attach himself somewhere, but the absence of any order of belief has left him morally defenseless and politically impotent. 29 Status consciousness becomes all-pervasive to the extent that the individual is increasingly tied to his status role. "His thoughts and feelings centre on the role, and he becomes incapable of thinking about general values, or of assuming responsibility for society."30 Beyond this, statuses erode the individual's basis of independence, which involves the wholesale abandon-

<sup>28</sup> Reich, op. cit., p.80.

<sup>29</sup> C. Wright Mills, White Collar: The American Middle Classes, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p.xvi.

<sup>30</sup> Reich, op. cit., p.83.

ment of responsibility and self-respect to someone in authority.

In the technocratic society, the scale and intricacy of all human activities - political, economic, and cultural transcends the competence of the amateurish citizen and inexorably demands the attention of specially trained experts. The government becomes institutionalized in the hands of professionals, experts, and managers, whose decisions are governed by the laws of bureaucratic behaviour and the laws of professional behaviour. Further, around this central core of experts who deal with large-scale public necessities, there develops a circle of subsidiary experts who, battening on the general social prestige of technical skill in the technocracy, assume authoritative influence over even the most seemingly personal aspects of life: sexual behaviour, childrearing, mental health, recreation, etc. Within such a society, the citizen, confronted by complexity, finds it necessary to defer on all matters to those who are specialists. 31

One of the more compelling consequences of the social problems engendered by the technological society concerns the relationship between the citizen and the democratic process. The principal enigma of liberal democracy arises from what Philip Selznick has called the "institutional vulnerability" of our society. This is a vulnerability reflected in the

<sup>31</sup> Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture, (Garden City: Anchor, 1969), p.7.

<sup>32</sup> Philip Selznick, "Institutional Vulnerability in Mass Society," American Journal of Sociology, (January, 1951).

diminished moral appeal of those primary centres of cultural allegiance within which the larger ends of liberal society take on binding meaning. It is precisely in the cultural allegiances of citizens, nourished psychologically in the smaller, internal areas of family, local community and association, which lie the most powerful resources of democracy. When the small areas of association become sterile as the result of the loss of institutional significance, the citizen discovers himself resorting to ever-increasing dosages of indoctrination from above, which often becomes totalitarian in significance. In the absence of meaning, democracy becomes reduced to its mechanical arrangements as a set of rules and procedures. As Kristol notes, majority rule and minority rights are reconciled into a state of equilibrium under this managerial conception of democracy. The purpose of democracy, he adds, cannot possibly be the endless functioning of its own political machinery. 33

The political mechanism of this democratic order is characterized, furthermore, by an increasingly large and powerful group of political technicians with experience and expertise in a set of disciplines indispensable to the functioning of the modern state: law and administration, economics and finance, science and technology, urbanism and health, military and political affairs. These technicians monopolize competence and experience in these fields: ordinary politicians and parliamentarians, except in the cases in which they themselves are recruited from amongst the technicians, may nominally

exercise authority over the technicians, but in fact the latter can and do frame policy. They control information, so that their advice on the formulation of policy generally amounts to policy formulation itself.<sup>34</sup>

The increasing political importance of the state technicians is a consequence of late developments in the process of bureaucratization. Ever more spheres of social life have been subjected to rationalization by hierarchical administrative structures. As Birnbaum argues, bureaucratic technique represents the rationalization of political choice itself, the desacralization of politics, the treatment of social conflict as matter for technical manipulation. The distinctive feature of the regime of experts lies in the fact that, while possessing ample power to coerce, it prefers to charm conformity by manipulating the securities and creature comforts of the industrial affluence which science has created. The state of the science has created.

<sup>34</sup> Birnbaum, op. cit., p.79.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.80.

Roszak, op. cit., p.9. As Reich points out, the emphasis is on the solving of problems as a "cure" for conflict. Richard Sennett has argued that the excessively "ordered" community freezes adults - both the young idealists and their security-oriented parents - into rigid attitudes that originate in adolescence and stifle further personal growth. He explains how the accepted ideal of order generates patterns of behaviour among the urban middle classes that are stultifying, narrow, and violence-prone. Richard Sennett, The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life, (New York: Knopf, 1970).

In other words, all forms of government seek to root their authority in the soil of popular acquiescence.

The Rise of Technocracy and "The End of Ideology":

These notions of acquiescence and conformity are in a fundamental sense congruent with the thesis that the basic problems of industrialization have been solved, presupposing a relative harmony between ideological differences.37 the necessity for imposing real political alternatives no longer appears to characterize the political process. development has given rise to the popular assumption of "an end of ideology" which posits the importance of political and social technique over the formulation of new social ideas which could engender conflict. The end of ideology thesis by implication assumes the inevitability of the decline or disappearance of articulated values, beliefs, preferences, expectations and prescriptions associated with particular social strata. 38 However, both Roszak and Birnbaum agree that the criterion of technical efficacy is in itself an ideology the relentless quest for efficiency, for order, for ever more extensive rational control. Herbert Marcuse adds:

In a provocative form, this proposition reveals the political aspects of the prevailing technological rationality. The productive apparatus and the goods and services which

- 37 Cf. S. M. Lipset, <u>Political Man</u>, (Garden City: Anchor, 1963), pp.442-443ff.
- In this regard, see C. I. Waxman (ed.), The End of Ideology Debate, (New York: Clarion, 1969), especially J. LaPalombara, "Decline of Ideology: A Dissent and an Interpretation," pp.315-324.

it produces "sell" or impose the social system as a whole. . . . as these products become available to more individuals in more social classes, the indoctrination they carry ceases to be publicity; it becomes a way of life . . . Thus emerges a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behaviour in which ideas, aspirations, and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to terms of this universe. They are redefined by the rationality of the given system and of its quantitative extension. 39

Youth Protest in the Context of Technological Society:

It is within this framework that youth disaffection has emerged in contemporary society. The individualistic, selfsufficient man of the early period of industrialization, represented as a generational collectivity, was unresponsive to the exigencies of the emerging corporate state. In a mass industrial society where the bureaucratic imperative became highly valued, the individual was subject to forces beyond his control (for example, the Great Depression). What the realities of the times seemed to demand was the organization and coordination of activity, the arrangement of things in a rational hierarchy of authority and responsibility, the dedication of each individual to training, work, and goals beyond himself. Furthermore, the public ideology of pragmatic liberalism could not sustain public and private virtues beyond the point of the calculable and the socially useful, with the result that practical social imperatives intimately

<sup>39</sup> Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp.11-12.

connected with the traditions of the past were eroded. 40 This situation presents itself as a tragic dilemma for the young, for they are forced by the excesses of technological society to grasp for substance and meaning where little or no cultural significance remains. As Nisbet asks: "How can there be a creative spirit of youthful revolt when there is nothing for revolt to feed upon but itself?" 41

It is with this in mind that the analysis of the emerging generational response to technological society, which evolved from the seeds of the ideology of economic individualism, will be developed. Although technocracy equally has affected adults and their youthful counterparts, the situation has become acute for the latter precisely because the older generation has no longer been able to elicit or impart a common sense of purpose and meaning. Consequently, the young have sought avenues of expression which they believe will at least partially alleviate their identity crisis and their feelings of alienation and anxiety. This response has taken the form of a variety of styles, which, in various degrees, reflects of profound condition of social estrangement from the collective values of the adult generation: vehement nonconformity as revealed in the formation of drug sub-cultures and bohemianism, political activism in numerous forms, religious revivalist movements, communalism, and in the "copping-out" styles of the socially apathetic. To be more specific, these responses in effect are related in a fundamental way to a

<sup>40</sup> Grant, "In Defence of North America," op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> Nisbet, op. cit., p.x.

conviction among the young that society has lost its moral significance. In the absence of clearly definable ethical imperatives, the young have embarked upon a search for meaning and an ultimate purpose in the social universe. For some this search has ended in frustration and dispair drugs become the only means for alleviating their inability to reconcile seemingly contradictory and ambivalent values. Others have turned to Christ for their salvation; for some the commune represents the only viable social existence relatively immune from the on-going cultural process. Religious faith in other instances has been subordinated by a desire for immediate solutions to contemporary perplexities dogma and ideology become the only viable expressions of discontent and estrangement. In the following chapter, the dimensions of this youthful search for meaning will be explored in the context of a society which is becoming increasingly bureaucratized and secularized.

## 3: THE SEARCH FOR MEANING AND ULTIMACY: AN EXAMINATION OF THE SOURCES OF YOUTH PROTEST

Secularization and its Implications:

One of the major controversies of recent years has centred on the role and function of religious beliefs and practices in the modern, secularized society. In an efficiency-oriented culture, religion, representing a concern for ultimate values in this world and next, has been forced to adapt its organization to the needs and exigencies of the major institutional spheres of society. As such, it has become secularized itself, as Harvey Cox's The Secular City, readily attests. Cox, in emphasizing the decline of religious rules and rituals for society's morality and meanings, points out that secularization relativizes religious world views and thus renders them innocuous. Religion is privatized and accepted as the peculiar prerogative and point of view of a particular person or group. 2 Furthermore, the anonymity and mobility of the secular city contributes, according to Cox, to enlarging the range of human communication and widening the scope of individual choice and concomitantly, to releasing man from religious and metaphysical control over his reason and his language. In effect, this process represents a transition in the history of civilization from one which was

<sup>1</sup> Harvey Cox, The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective, (New York: Macmillan, 1965). Secularization is the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. (p.1).

<sup>2 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.2.

generally based on ultimate, sacred values to one which is now concerned with rational, secular values. It is precisely this situation that confronts the contemporary generation of disaffected youth and which has occasioned them to seek ultimate meanings from the world and to extrapolate truths which could serve as guidelines for behaviour beyond the rationalized choices found in an industrialized, mechanized system.<sup>3</sup>

The analysis of this search for ultimacy and meaning inevitably leads back to a discussion of religion, for religious beliefs have enabled men to interpret their social experience in order to consolidate and validate their position in the world. To be more precise, the historically crucial part of religion in the process of legitimation, i.e., the knowledge that serves to explain and justify the social order, is explicable in terms of the unique capacity of religion to "locate" human phenomena within a cosmic frame of reference. All legitimation serves to maintain reality - reality, that

## 3 Arthur Gish notes:

At the very depths of our own existence there is a future to anticipate, a beyond and unknown which is uncontrollable by man. It seems to be a sociological fact that where there are no gods, men either find them or create them, be they objects, nations, or ideals. Man does search for ultimates. When the Christian names the name of God, he is saying that there is an ultimate beyond our comprehension and thus nothing finite, no system, no idea, no object may be raised to the level of ultimacy. It is a recognition of a mystery in life that defies our feeble rationalizations. Arthur G. Gish, The New Left and Christian Radicalism, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1970), p.80.

is, as defined in a particular human collectivity. Religious legitimation purports to relate the humanly defined reality to ultimate, universal and sacred reality. The inherently precarious and transitory constructions of human activity are thus given the semblance of ultimate security and permanence.

Thus, the covert and depth dimensions of social existence have their being in the realm of the sacred, which stands in an oppositional relationship to the major institutional spheres of public society, the secular, which is predominantly manifest in the spheres of economic and political activity. By the sacred is not meant organized, institutionalized religion; the latter emerges from but does not exhaust the content of the sacred which transcends any particular socio-historical reality. The sacred, to follow Durkheim, is the social order symbolized so that the individual receives a sense of ultimate meaning from some higher ethical source.<sup>5</sup>

- 4 Peter Berger, The Sacred Canopy, (New York: Anchor, 1969), pp.35-36.
- See Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, trans. by J. W. Swain, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1948). For analyses of Durkheim's work, see H. Ginsberg, "Durkheim's Theory of Religion," On the Diversity of Morals, (New York: Macmillan, 1957), ch.14; Talcott Parsons, The Structure of Social Action, (New York: Free Press, 1965), ch.11; Raymond Aron, Main Currents in Sociological Thought, II, (New York: Anchor, 1970), pp.11-115; Robert Nisbet, The Sociological Tradition, (New York: Basic Books, 1969). According to Durkheim, what constitutes the category of the religious is the bi-partite division of the world into what is profane and what is sacred. The sacred consists of a body of things, beliefs and rites. When a number of sacred things maintain relations of coordination and subordination with

For Durkheim, the essence of religion is the sacred community of believers, the indispensable feeling of collective oneness in worship and faith.

The believer who has communicated with his god is not merely a man who sees new truths of which the unbeliever is ignorant; he is a man who is stronger. He feels within him more force, either to endure the trials of existence, or to conquer them.

Durkheim notes, however, that the sacred contains antithetical divine and demonic forces, necessitating some sort
of reconciliation of them by the social order. It is from
the fundamental antimony within the sacred itself, i.e.,
within ultimate being itself, that the social order emerges
as the regulation of the sacred - the converting of irrational
moral forces into rational means-ends activity. 7 In effect,
this process represents, according to E. A. Tiryakian, the
development of social structuration or moralization. 8 Con-

one another so as to form a system of the same kind, this body of corresponding beliefs and rites constitutes a religion. Religion hence presupposes first the sacred; next, the organization of beliefs regarding the sacred into a group; finally, rites or practices which proceed in a more or less logical manner from the body of beliefs.

- 6 Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, op. cit., p.416.
- 7 E. A. Tiryakian, "Structural Sociology," in J. C. McKinney and E. A. Tiryakian (eds.), <u>Theoretical Sociology</u>, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), p.123.
- 8 <u>Thid.</u> This formulation is in many respects parallel to Erving Goffman's observation that "to describe the rules regulating a social interaction is to describe its structure." E. Goffman, <u>Interaction Ritual</u>, (N.Y.:Doubleday, 1970), p.144.

versely, the process of destructuration or deregulation of institutional life involves the demoralization of the social order, paralleling Durkheim's use of the concept of anomie. Durkheim notes that in every society where organic solidarity prevails, there is a risk of disaggregation or anomie. The more that modern society encourages individuals to claim the right to fulfill their own personalities and gratify their own desires in utilitarian or profane activities, the more danger there is that the individual may forget the requirements of discipline which is necessary for the continuity of the social order and end by being perpetually unsatisfied. However, Durkheim adds, when ritual obervances are celebrated, men's thoughts "are centred upon their common beliefs, their common traditions, the memory of their ancestors, the collective idea of which they are the incarnation; in a word, upon social things. . . . The spark of social being which each bears within him necessarily participates in this collective renovation. The individual soul is regenerated, too, by being dipped again in the sources from which its life came; consequently, it feels itself stronger, more fully master of itself, less dependent upon physical necessities."9

Analogous to Durkheim's notion of the sacred is Weber's concept of charisma. Its essence is simply possession of - or belief in possession of - supra-rational qualities by an individual that are variously deemed prophetic, sacred, and transcendental. Weber notes that "the corporate group which

<sup>9</sup> Durkheim, <u>op. cit.</u>, p.348.

<sup>10</sup> H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, (New York: Oxford, 1946), pp.245-252.

is subject to charismatic authority is based on an emotional form of communal relationship." 11 Furthermore, there are no "officials", no administrative hierarchy, but only disciples, believers, and followers: those of commitment and zeal rather than of employment or service. Charismatic authority is "specifically outside the realm of everyday routine and the profane sphere. In this respect it is sharply opposed both to rational, and particularly bureaucratic, authority, and to traditional authority, whether in its patriarchal, patrimonial, or any other form." 12 It is of theoretical importance to note that charismatic authority may become routinized, thus transfering the essence of authority to another person or thing, and thereby eliminating the purely personal character of the original leader. For example, the cross represents the charismatic dynamism of Jesus; in Nazi Germany the swastika represented the charismatic authority of Adolf Hitler. The charismatic essence of ritual and dogma and of the various precepts and injunctions form a code by which the fellowship of the charisma is continued and reinforced.

For Weber, the development of modern, industrial society has diminished the sway of charisma and lessened the number of occasions on which charismatic authority might prevail. Rationalization, which for Weber is the master process of Western history, is the source of this diminution of charisma. For Durkheim as with Weber, the emergence of a rational

<sup>11</sup> Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. by Talcott Parsons, (New York: Free Press, 1964), p.360.

<sup>12 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.361.

economic organization based on organic solidarity precipitated certain specific consequences. Durkheim saw in the rising incidence of anomie in modern Europe evidence of a long-run decline in sacred values, a decline caused by the influence of modern doctrines of materialism and skepticism which gave rise to individualism and secularization. By contrast, as Robert Nisbet points out:

With Weber . . . it is not so much loss of membership as it is organized hypertrophy, in the form of bureaucratization of culture and life, that must be seen as the immediate source of the decline of charisma. Bureaucracy, Weber thought, was forming a crust over society that might become too thick to permit occasional eruptions of charismatic individuals such as the history of the past revealed. And the whole temper of scientific, rational modernism would be increasingly alien to the formation of the contexts of belief, or suspension of disbelief, in which alone charismatic power may take form. 13

In exploring the implications of bureaucratization and the forces of secularization, we are necessarily drawn into a discussion of the relationship between culture and religion. Culture may be conceptualized as a set of symbols which are expressions of value orientations, provided we keep in mind that these symbols are at various depths of inter-subjective consciousness and that they do not constitute a closed system. As Tiryakian points out, the deeper the levels, the more symbolic the cultural reality, and concomitantly, the more detached the individual becomes from the on-going cultural system. Cultural symbols, in this vein, may be seen as being

<sup>13</sup> Nisbet, op. cit., p.256.

at intermediate levels between the surface aspects of culture and the deepest, most tenebrous levels which are states of divergent and often conflicting moral ideas and antithetical religious forces. 14 It is from these depths that charisma, for example, arises.

By contrast, religious expressions which are publicly recognized and legitimated (such as those found in churches and denominations in the Western context) and which have a high degree of rationalization, are unable to extract moral sentiments which lie detached from the on-going cultural process. Organized, institutional religion in the modern Western context acts to reinforce and legitimate other institutionalized activity; aesthetic sensibility, the belief in transcendence, and sensuality itself were radically altered, according to Norman Birnbaum, by the industrialization of culture. 15 It is precisely those religious sentiments which are concerned with the ultimate and sacred aspects of life that are characteristic of people who are alienated or disenchanted with the cultural situation as it exists and who reject institutionalization. For them, an attempt is made to reconcile their often conflicting moral ideas with a belief system which provides meaning and a sense of purpose. It is an attempt which characterizes the new youth counterculture and which has represented various religious organizations in the past.

It has been within these organizations which have been

<sup>14</sup> Tiryakian, op. cit., p.125.

<sup>15</sup> Norman Birnbaum, The Crisis of Industrial Society, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p.106ff.

characterized by esoteric and utopian orientations that a conviction emerges to the effect that man can improve himself both socially and morally. 16 As such, these groups constitute a type of religious underground and their sociological significance lies in the area of societal change. As Tiryakian notes, this possibility for change does not merely constitute a transformation in the context of institutional life but rather a transformation in the societal structure within which institutions are organized. 17 This general societal structure (which structures and orders the more differentiated institutional organizations) is a moral religious frame of reference which for the social actors that operate in its framework is only tacitly experienced. 18 In other words, it is not a situational "object" for them since it is part of their own subjectivity (in Durkheimian terms, the conscience collective is equivalent to this intersubjective general structure). 19

## As Tiryakian concludes:

Innovations of societal structure, therefore, can only come from actors or collectivities who are consciously outside this broad normative frame of reference which we identify as societal structure. Societal change stems from those who are religious radicals, alien to or alienated from the normative order of the on-going society. . . The implication of this hypothesis is

<sup>16</sup> See Maren Lockwood, "The Experimental Utopia in America," <u>Daedalus</u>, (Spring, 1965).

<sup>17</sup> Tiryakian, <u>op. cit.</u>, p.126.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> See Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labour in Society, trans. by George Simpson, (New York: Free Press, 1947).

that a sociological analysis of structural change manifested in political and economic departures from established institutional channels must consider their background cultural setting in religious movements and groupings outside the pale of the visible social establishment.

The Utopian Response to Bureaucratization and Secularization:

In order to understand the possibilities of structural change in modern, industrial society, then we must pursue an analysis of the organization of religious or semi-religious groupings which represent a potential source of innovation and the hope for the creation of a new moral order based on justice, peace, and cooperation. A crucial implication for this inquiry concerns the examination of youth protest and discontent, for the utopian experiment historically has been created as a response to alienation, moral deprivation, and loss of mean-Specifically, the utopian communities which originated initially in America were implicitly concerned with the effects of industrialization on the organization of work and its consequences for the development of communal social bonds. new industry, according to Maren Lockwood, was perceived as a threat to man's independence in the sense of subverting him into a mechanical being powerless to influence how he worked, lived, and played. 21

<sup>20</sup> Tiryakian, <u>op. cit</u>., p.126.

<sup>21</sup> Lockwood, op. cit., p.405. This type of community may be defined as a territorially based voluntary organization made up of men and women who practise a system of communal production as well as communal consumption and who are committed to an ethico-religious belief system which rejects the dominant values of the host society. Further-

Peter Clark has pointed out that the specific goal of these communal organizations may be conceptualized in terms of three possibilities: the separation of a spiritual elite from a "worldly" society and the creation of God's perfect kingdom on earth; the establishment of an experimental model society which could serve as a spring board for the future regeneration of an unjust society; or the formation of a sanctuary of self-realization and inner-contemplation for the refugees who have escaped from a society deemed insane and self-destructive. <sup>22</sup>

American communal colonies as potential sources of social change and the overcoming of man's alienation. 23 It was in the spirit of collective responsibility and cooperation that Engels foresaw the elimination of alienated human labour and the development of communism. At this stage in their intellectual development, when the overcoming of human alienation and estrangement was their centrally defined aim, the political program of Marx and Engels was the establishment of socialist communities. However, when they discarded the concept of "alienation" as the basis for their political phil-

more, the criteria upon which men evaluate and compare themselves such as wealth, political power, education, family connections and technical skill are renounced and replaced by commitment to a contraculture. See Peter Clark, "The Utopian Formula: A Comparative Analysis of the Organizational Structure of Intentional Communities," Presented to the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association, St. John's, Nfld., June 6-9, 1971.

<sup>22 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.2. See also J. M. Yinger, "Contraculture and

osophy in favour of the notion of political class struggle, they were discarding as well the program of founding communist colonies in their attempt to differentiate revolutionary praxis from communal withdrawal. The affinity between the theory of "alienation" and the practice of "community", Lewis Feuer shows, is one which has nevertheless persisted in socialist thinking. A Martin Buber, for instance, in Paths in Utopia has virtually returned to the philosophy of Marx and Engels in their communitarian, pre-Manifesto days. Buber has reached back into the positive content of that movement which Marx and Engels later assailed as "utopian"; he has seen in the village communes in Israel the most outstanding contemporary example of the overcoming of "collective loneliness". 25

## The Youth Commune:

It is precisely this possibility of attaining an escape from alienation and estrangement which has provided the primary impetus to youth communes in their search for ultimate

Subculture, "American Sociological Review, (October, 1960), Vol.25, pp.625-35; Martin Buber, Paths in Utopia, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1949); Roy Ald, The Youth Communes, (New York: Tower Publications, 1970).

- 23 See Lewis Feuer, "The Influence of the American Communist Colonies on Engels and Marx," The Western Political Quarterly, Vol.19, (September, 1966), pp.458-474.
- 24 <u>Ibid.</u>, p.465.
- 25 Buber, op. cit., pp.14, 140-41.

meaning from the world. This search does not necessarily include well-defined or clearly articulated political objectives, but rather is concerned with the establishment of communitarian relationships based on brotherhood and cooperation. For some who have chosen the hippie commune as a response to the viscissitudes of organized society, communal withdrawal has been combined with an intense search for existential experience in the form of drugs and mystical religion in the hope of achieving ultimate truth. One mode of attaining this objective, according to the hippie, is expanding the individual personality to its creative limits. It posits that man's essential nature is to be creative in any form. 26 Since the inner satisfaction of the creative act is not dependent upon what is created, the commune movement believes that inner satisfaction can be derived just as well from the provision of food for others as the creation of an opera. It is this way that the commune attempts to consolidate itself as a realistic unit which has enough cohesiveness to provide the necessities and still maintain optimum personal freedom.

However, in order to form a vaible work force, the communal organization must recruit new members from the host society on the basis of their potential productivity. This increases the possibility that the community's distinctive ideological or religious system will become diluted, since the new converts are more likely to be heterogeneous in their

<sup>26</sup> See Jerry Rubin, <u>Do It!</u>, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969); Timothy Leary, <u>The Politics of Ecstasy</u>, (New York: Putnam, 1968).

cultural makeup than the original members. As Peter Clark shows, conversion of the new members is likely to be a more lengthy process than the time taken to make the novice productive, since the newcomer is likely to bring with him many of the requisite productive skills but must begin at the bottom of the spiritual hierarchy. The recruitment of individuals who show little interest in the ideological ideals of the community but who join in order to further their own material interests, occurs with such frequency especially at a time when values are seemingly conflicting and ambivalent that these individuals are often given a generic label, such as "plastic hippie". The reverse situation, in effect the recruitment of the unproductive philosopher, has led to the breakdown of numerous hippie communes. 28

It is ironic that the hippies especially and the youth movement in general tend to be somewhat anti-historical in the sense that they often reject the Western cultural tradition, although much of their critique arises from that tradition. Many adopt a form of Oriental mysticism based on the "yin yang" principle, or the unity of polar opposites. These philosophies posit the meaninglessness of one's present life on earth, since the only true reality is the cosmic reality in which the self is unified with the whole of the universe. Introspection and meditation allow the complete denial of the ego through complete immersion in the ego.

There is a danger in this turn to orientalism which

<sup>27</sup> Clark, op. cit., p.6.

<sup>28</sup> Ald, op. cit., p.16.

requires some persistent thinking to avoid. Positing the unity of good and evil does not necessarily mean that it makes no difference in which light one perceives reality. In fact, Alan Watts suggests that the Christian concept of absolute evil embodied in Satan - absolute damnation in hell - forced man to shut his eyes to it and hindered his ability to deal with it. The consciousness of the reality between the absolute good and evil is necessary before the latter can be effectively dealt with. 29 The failure to follow Watts' argument to its conclusion leads to a form of nihilism, i.e., that there is no such thing as good and evil, and that nothing really There are strains of this orientation in both the matters. hippie and activist movements, probably more in the former because the decision to take any kind of action requires a commitment to something.

Norman Cohn, in his analysis of the revolutionary millenarian movements of the Middle Ages, explains the mystical proclivities of contemporary communal experiments as an alternative route to the Millennium. "For the ideal of a total emancipation of the individual from society, even from external reality itself - the ideal, if one will, of self-divination - which some nowadays try to realize with the help of psychedelic drugs, can be recognized already in that deviant form of medieval mysticism." Conversely, emotionally charged phantasies of a final, apocalyptic struggle or an

<sup>29</sup> Alan Watts, The Two Hands of God, (New York: G. Braziller, 1963), p.169.

Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.286.

egalitarian Millennium (intimately connected with the notion of ultimacy) attracted, on the one hand, the populations of certain technologically backward societies which are not only overpopulated and desperately poor but also involved in a problematic transition to the modern world, and are correspondingly dislocated and disoriented; and, on the other hand, certain politically marginal elements in technologically advanced societies - chiefly young or unemployed workers and a small minority of intellectuals and students. 31 In effect, as Y. Talmon points out, the predisposing factor in the development of millenarianism was not so much any particular hardship but a markedly uneven relation between expectations and the means of their satisfaction. 32 For instance, during the second half of the Middle Ages, worldliness amongst the clergy resulted in disaffection amongst the laity. To be uncertain of the consolation and guidance and mediation of the Church aggravated their sense of helplessness and increased their desperation. It is because of these emotional needs that militant social movements or salvationist groups led by miracle-working ascetics were developed. 33

The "Jesus Freak" Movement:

Similarly, among a significant proportion of disaffected

- 31 <u>Ibid.</u>, p.285.
- Y. Talmon, "Pursuit of the Millennium: The Relation between Religious and Social Change," in J. R. Gusfield (ed.), Protest, Reform, and Revolt: A Reader in Social Movements, (New York: Wiley, 1970), p.444.
- 33 Cohn, op. cit., p.283.

youth today, the decline of authority precipitated by changes in the family and other institutional areas means uncertainty and estrangement. Consequently, elements of the youth counterculture seek meaning and a sense of ultimacy from conservative religion which would combine spiritual revivalism with millenarian hope. 34 This new movement, although not in the strictest sense against established, institutionalized religion, nonetheless is fundamentally opposed to the principles of compromise and expediency, which organized religion osten-In this regard an analogy can be drawn sibly practises. between the youth protest movement and sectarian religious groups, both of which have conceptualized compromise as an establishment rationale used to justify the status quo. like established religions, the liberal options of "selling out" or basing decisions on expediency rather than on faithfulness to one's commitment are rejected. 35 Ernst Troeltsch has noted that the attitude toward compromise is one of the important distinctions between the establishment and radical mentalities.36

The secular, urban man, writes Harvey Cox, must distinguish carefully between his private life and his public relationships. Since he depends on such a complex net of services
to maintain himself in existence in a modern city, the majority

<sup>34</sup> See "The New Rebel Cry: Jesus Is Coming," <u>Time Magazine</u>, (June 21, 1971), pp.36-47.

<sup>35</sup> Gish, op. cit, p.95.

See Benjamin Reist, <u>Toward a Theory of Involvement: The Thought of Ernst Troeltsch</u>, (Philadelphia:Westminster Press, 1966), pp.156-163.

of his transactions will have to be public or in sociological terms, secondary. In most of his relationships, Cox argues, he will be dealing with people he cannot afford to be interested in as individuals but must deal with in terms of the services they render to him and he to them. 37 Arthur Gish traces this distinction to Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms which foreclosed a separation between personal and social ethics. In effect this dichotomy assumes that the expectations of people in institutional roles are different in personal relationships. The most obvious consequence of this split between personal and social morality is that people will do things in the context of an institution that they would never do as individuals. 38 For instance, the ideal suburban church member may derive his income from the most abandoned slum housing in the city. As soon as he steps outside that charmed circle of church, family, and suburban neighbourhood, he may become a tyrant, a ruthless exploiter of men, a participant in any number of merciless conspiracies. 39

The role of religion then, in modern industrial society, is considered to be relevant in the subjective, personal, and individualistic aspects of life. Faith is considered to have little significance for social and bureaucratic relationships. God becomes a privatized idol, while justice and righteousness become void for most of man's experience. For those

<sup>37</sup> Cox, op. cit., p.283.

<sup>38</sup> Gish, op. cit., p.96.

<sup>39</sup> Peter Berger, The Noise of Solemn Assemblies, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1961), pp.37-38.

among the youth counterculture who have ostensibly answered the call of Jesus, however, this separation of the social and personal has no longer any relevance. Full personal responsibility - the attribute which Charles Reich applauds in his analysis of the ideology of the youth counterculture 40 - demands that men should no longer assume a duality of ethical or moral standards in their interpersonal associations. According to the "Jesus freaks", it is through a shared sense of commitment that public and individual morality are enjoined and provides the opportunity for the overcoming of the frustration, anxiety, and boredom which they experienced in the "straight" society.

By contrast to the faithful who consider discipline and responsibility to be intimately connected with spiritual revelation, there has emerged another element of the youth counterculture which has relied on pragmatism and dogma for its meaning and purpose. Radical ideologies or programmes drawn up to expose the inconsistencies and hypocricies of a technological society, provide instant symbolic legitimation for the militant behaviour of student radicals. As opposed to the perspective which posits the possibility of achieving salvation by opening one's mind to Jesus, those committed to militancy are able to attain a sense of purpose through faith in the prospects of a radical reconstruction of North American society. Insofar as these political propensities represent a faith in the future realization of a more equitable and responsible society, however, they are in a very

<sup>40</sup> Charles Reich, The Greening of America, (New York: Bantam, 1971), esp. pp.233-430.

fundamental sense identical to the collective strivings of the religious-oriented types. Despite the divergence in their modes of expression, both groups are responding to an apparent loss of meaning which has precipitated a sense of uselessness and estrangement.

Political Expressions of the Search for Ultimacy and Meaning:

It was in the spirit of a shared sense of commitment which initiated the student movement in the universities. The Port Huron Statement 41 developed for the 1962 convention of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) focuses on the need for maintaining an individualistic community in the face of an increasingly bureaucratized and impersonalized administration of large organizations, from the business corporation to the multiversity. In a more general sense, the statement was formulated as a solution to the problem of alienation, of man's loss of control over the ordering of his life. It includes also the explication of the values of fraternity, honesty, and freedom and introduces the notion of "participatory democracy" as the students' solution to contemporary perplexities. This notion implies a state of society which requires the full participation of all those affected by significant policy decisions in every sphere of life, in determining the nature of the decisions. Freedom is defined as acting according to the dictates of one's own conscience, or as acting unopposed, rather than being

See "From the Port Huron Statement," in M. Cohen and D. Hale (eds.), The New Student Left, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), pp.9-15.

confined by the degree of choice the more or less coercive institutions of society allowed the individual. This new ideology in effect maintains that there could be no real freedom without democracy in all of America's institutions and that there can be no real community without a high value placed on the dignity of the individual.

Fundamentally, their quest for community stems from the fact that modern industrial society's development progressed by undermining and sapping the strength of the traditional foundations of solidarity: the sense of religious community, of primary group loyalty, of allegiance to ageold authority. The widespread feeling of inadequacy of community motivated men to search for new communion in churches, unions, suburbs, and all manner of voluntary associations. However, as Charles Taylor points out, the gap opened by the decline of traditional foundations has also had to be partly filled by the economic self-image of industrial society itself. The reason for playing one's part according to the rules was no longer that all authority comes from God, or that life outside one's community was inconceivable. It was that one was part of a vast engine of production based on peaceful negotiation and a disciplined, rational division of labour. To reject this idea, Taylor notes, would be to jeopardize this great enterprise, the source of welfare, happiness and dignity for all. 42

The student radicals stand opposed to this self-image of modern industrial society as a vast productive engine

<sup>42</sup> Charles Taylor, "The Agony of Economic Man," The Canadian Forum, (April-may, 1971), p.45 and passim.

based on creative work, disciplined and rational effort.

Furthermore, they conceive substitute organizations and associations such as the trade union and social club as inadequate for one very important reason, as David Garson notes:

Radicals believed that the democratization of information by modern mass media tended to consolidate opinion behind decisions which had already been made. Isolated individuals and families listening to television in their own homes and apartments seemed capable of coming to decisions based on discussion. The "democratic process" which was the foundation of freedom necessitated a confrontation of view, a personal interchange and discussion; in short, democracy necessitated participation in decision-making institutions in order to be "substantive". It is on this basis that the new left concern for counter-institutions such as community unions and free universities is to be interpreted. 45

In addition, radicals have come to view political liberalism in terms of its increasingly cynical and callous pragmatism which rationalizes tokenism in civil rights, endorses
brutal warfare in Vietnam, denies the poor representation on
the agencies which dominate their lives, and remains indifferent to students' own demands for a voice in their universities.

44

Although economic development in the form of increased production presupposes the overcoming of poverty, the provision of education for the masses and freedom of choice, the

- David Garson, "The Ideology of the New Student Left," in J. Foster and D. Long (eds.), <u>Protest! Student</u>
  Activism in America, (New York: Morrow, 1970), p.192.
- 44 See Staughton Lynd, The Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism, (New York: Pantheon, 1968).

production-oriented society nonetheless inevitably begins to set its own priorities in the form of production for its own sake and a glorification of the products. As Taylor argues, when the hold of this image wanes, men have the feeling that this vast and diversified activity no longer has any purpose. 45 Consequently, in the face of meaninglessness and emptiness, men, especially the disaffected young, who cannot find a satisfactory identity in society's vision of the future, adopt a counter ideology which reflects a desire for purpose and a search for an ultimate meaning beyond the rationalized choices of organized society.

For those of the new left who rejected the efficacy of community organizing projects as a means for overcoming the ostensible meaninglessness of technological society, commitment to a radical ideology has become the vehicle of effective opposition. For instance, The Progressive Labour Party (PL) bases its ideological position on the Leninist principles of democratic centralism, as well as an American version of Chinese Communism, i.e., revolutionary action for the transformation of the technological system. In order to clarify their ideological prerogatives, PL has a rigorous educational program for its own members on the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism and on the analyses of current struggles. Whether one believes in principle the interpretations of PL or not, their strong party program represents a successful attempt at defining their biases and consolidating them into a coherent theory.

<sup>45</sup> Taylor, op. cit., p.49.

The W. E. B. DuBois Clubs of America, although not as rigidly revolutionary as PL, do represent a Marxist position as far as the working class controlling the means of production is concerned. Generally they favour coalition with the liberal forces inside the Democratic Party and other liberal institutions, especially the trade union movement. Their aim is a practical one - to organize a viable political movement to convince large numbers of people that political action, primarily through electoral means, will solve America's problems.

The Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) perhaps is most indicative of the old-line political analysis which emerged from the thirties, which concentrated its intellectual and activist energy on making changes in America's political and economic system on bread-and-butter issues. Its ideological prerogatives are based on the thinking of Leon Trotsky - its faith is concentrated in the historic mission of the working class which it believes, was betrayed both in the Soviet Union and in China, although to different degrees. Commitment is maintained through an educational program, as with PL, leaning heavily on classical Marxism. By contrast, the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL) functions primarily as the anti-Communist socialist opposition. It is close to the DuBois Clubs' position on political action: it does not foresee possibilities of revolution, and therefore hopes to accomplish what it can through coalition with the Democratic Party and union institutions or with civil rights leadership. Unlike the Marxist-Leninist vanguard party vision, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) ethos does not assume that it knows what is good for the people, but would rather help people organize around their needs. Black power does influence their position somewhat, for recently their aim has been to develop angry militancy in the urban slums in order to channel discontent into a potential mass movement, and in some cases has given way to the Black Panther movement. Because of frustration in mobilizing support as a result of civil rights legislation and a continuing apathy among Negores and poor whites which gravitates against militant behaviour, 46 SNCC's tactics have tended to indicate a proclivity toward politics of confrontation and provocation. This tendency was growing among SDS as well.

As we have seen, at its outset SDS was primarily interested in organizing community projects and in combating discrimination and poverty. However, The Port Huron Statement no longer expresses official SDS policy; the community projects failed to provide the agent of social change which the radicals were looking for. The problem was not one of the organization of the poor but the avoidance of the problems which attempts at organization precipitated. The programme's services were short-sighted and ineffective largely as a result of SDS's inability to fully appreciate the long-run

<sup>46</sup> Eric Hoffer identified the tendency of the poor to remain philosophically conservative and thus the most unlikely to engage in mass movements. Eric Hoffer, The True Believer, (New York: Harper & Row, 1951).

consequences of their actions. In general they underestimated their task and when faced with difficulties in changing the values and attitudes of the dispossessed and channeling their discontent into policies for extensive social change,
SDS chose to change tactics rather than persevere. As a
result, the political expedient of confrontation was considered to be the most efficacious means toward changing the
system. In some instances, it became anarchistic in its
orientation, attempting to drive authority into acts of
suppression which ostensibly would reveal its "hidden violence" and the true nature of society. Anarchism, with its
unrelenting assault on all forms of authority and its lack of
rational goals became exposed to the danger of becoming nihilistic - the "weathermen" provide the empirically supportive
evidence of this tendency.

It is clearly evident that in this case and others which practise confrontation and provocation tactics, style has taken precedence over the content of revolt, i.e., that the existential act of rebellion, whatever its forms, has come to be enough. Collective action, as M. Cohen and D. Hale point out, implies alliances, whereas the student who sees rebellion as a private act usually decorates his world view with extremely militant and exclusive moral imperatives.

Morality and politics, the authors conclude, seem to be incompatible. Such an orientation toward "militant and exclusive moral imperatives" at the expense of systematic political opposition has resulted in part from the realities of

<sup>47</sup> Cohen and Hale, op. cit., p.xxii.

the student's political education. If a person is to appreciate the importance of political issues, he must see them as relevant - whether positively or negatively - to his personal fortunes. The apparent paternalism of the secondary school and college, Thomas Hayden believes, achieves precisely the opposite: namely that politics is unreal, futile, and irrelevant. 48

In order to determine whether this is an accurate assessment of the situation which exists in the educational system, attention will be focused in the next chapter on the organization and ideals of the university. For some students, the university experience provides a periodic episode in their lives for experimentation and reality testing. Others become acquainted with new interpretations of the rationale underlying the social system and thereby find some substance for their feelings of disenchantment and loss of meaning. Still others are career-oriented - conceiving the university as a means to secure a job after graduation. The theoretically significant point in this instance concerns the possible discrepancy between expectation and fulfillment and the potential for increased disaffection if these expectations remain unsatisfied. Finally, it is important to explore whether the university in contemporary society is able to create an intellectually creative atmosphere which in turn provides its students with a meaningful and relevant education. If indeed the university community remains committed to the pursuit of

<sup>48</sup> Thomas Hayden, "The Politics of 'The Movement'," in Irving Howe (ed.), The Radical Papers, (New York: Anchor, 1966), pp.362-377.

knowledge and academic excellence and at the same time is relatively abstracted from the exigencies of a highly rationalized, bureaucratized, and secularized social system, then it perhaps will be able to contribute to the alleviation of the student's identity crisis and relieve him of his boredom, anxiety, and sense of obsolescence and uselessness. However, to the extent that it remains a tool of corporate and political interests, and is perceived as such by its students, we may discover an increase in the number of young people turning to other sources for meaning and direction - communal, religious revivalist, or politically radical movements.

## 4: YOUTH PROTEST AND THE CONTEMPORARY UNIVERSITY

Up to this point, the origins and content of generational disaffection have been conceptualized not only as a response to the vicissitudes of organizational change in our technocratic culture but also as an extension of the vacuum created between generations, which has precipitated a search for meaning, identity, and for an ultimate purpose in the social order. Without any clearly established guidelines for patterning their behaviour, the young have tended to reject adult values, substituting in their place a radical commitment to the establishment of a new moral order based on cooperation and full personal responsibility or has led to a complete rejection or withdrawal from the adult world. As another alterative, various members of the youth counterculture have been predisposed toward the militant or fundamentalist character of religious or political ideologies as a means for understanding the social or cosmic order. As E. H. Erikson points out, ideologies offer to the members of this age-group overly simplified and yet determined answers to those vague inner states and those urgent questions which arise in consequence of identity conflict. Ideologies serve to channel youth's forceful earnestness and sincere commitment as well as "their search for excitement and their eager indignation toward that social frontier where the struggle between conservatism and radicalism is most alive."1

Given the opportunities for exploration and experimentation which age-group membership provides, the young never-

<sup>1</sup> Erik H. Erikson, Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History, (New York: Norton, 1958), pp.38-39; see also

theless experience a feeling of deprivation, the deprivation that comes from having to meet requests which are ill-fitted to one's capacities or attitudes, requests which proceed from assumptions which seem alien. As Kaspar Naegele notes, the adult world facing youth is not longer able to adequately represent a coherent set of standards, values, or guidelines. Instead the young tend to stand equidistant from home and school as they seek emancipation from their early dependence; and thus they are drawn into private reciprocities with their peers that are collective or even more intimate.<sup>2</sup>

At this stage in their emotional and intellectual development, the value-transmitting agencies such as the family, church, and school are presented to youth in absolute, right or wrong moral terms. Consequently, their contact with the articulated moral and political standards of their society is abstract; they encounter them as principles promulgated by older persons, as imposed by authority, rather than as maxims incorporated into and reinforced by their own experience.

The relations of youth with the parental generation is also complicated by the fact that the institutions or value-transmitting agencies within which they have been socialized before entering college or university are more likely to be concerned with inculcating the values of older generations, with shield-

E. H. Erikson, "Youth: Fidelity and Diversity," <u>Daedalus</u>, Vol. 91, No. 1, (Winter, 1962); E. H. Erikson, <u>Identity</u>: Youth and Crisis, (New York: Norton, 1968).

<sup>2</sup> Kaspar Naegele, "Youth and Society: Some Observations," Daedalus, Vol.91, No.1, (Winter, 1962), p.63.

ing youth from the effects of changes that erode older beliefs, than with preparing youth to cope with change. As a result, contact with a variety of possibilities not taught within the family is confusing, and, rather than remain in a state of doubt, many young people seek a new certainty in beliefs opposed to those taught at home. Radical movements give them an idealistic rationale for breaking with their families, especially when parents are perceived as supporters of the reactionary system.

Concomitant with youth's propensity to challenge the legitimacy of familial authority is the tendency to question the moral realities of the existing order at large. This process, which occurs for the first time when the adolescent discovers the cultural heritage of his society and its ideological polarities, is referred to as the "transcending impulse" by Karl Mannheim. The realization that his immediate milieu is not the world at large and that there is more than one way of life occasions the first "distance experience" and the first urge to transcend his environment. It is with a sense of liberation that the adolescent discovers alternative interpretations and new values. Self-assertion and defiance accompany this experience. The really crucial stage, however, occurs in the second phase of the "transcending impulse," for it reveals the adolescent's uncertainty and tendency to drift from one viewpoint to another. This could lead him back to

Karl Mannheim, "The Natural History of the Intellectual," Essays on the Sociology of Culture, Ernest Manheim (ed.), (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), pp. 159-166.

his original position where his former values may be re-established or, on the other hand, could result in the adoption of a radical solution, most often of a political or religious Mannheim contends that intellectual fanaticism is not the product of a tacitly accepted heritage, but the expression of an anxiety to end the wear and tear of a state of suspense by the adoption of one or more categorical creeds. 4 These "categorical creeds" provide the adolescent with the opportunity to explore or experience a variety of viewpoints or ideologies but often do not allow him the certainty of the establishment of a moral position without a great deal of psychological strain and anxiety. By contrast, the "Jesus freaks" believe that the adoption of the biblical creed and all of its ramifications provides the mechanism for solving the inherent contradictions of a technological order and through a shared sense of personal commitment it can overcome the problems and anxieties associated with maturation and certification into the adult world. Religious fundamentalism in this sense becomes, in Mannheim's terms, a total ideology, 5 capable of providing a meaningful model for establishing one's identity and protecting itself from external encroachments to its legitimacy.

The School and the Middle-Class Student:

It generally has been considered that the university community offers ample opportunity for young people to est-

<sup>4 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.165.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Mannheim, <u>Ideology and Utopia</u>, (New York: Harvest, 1936), esp. pp.64-69.

ablish their identity through the exploration of a variety of interpretations of social life and for the sake of the excellence of knowledge itself would adequately prepare the young for morally and intellectually responsible adult roles. university ostensibly facilitates the difficulties faced in choosing not only a career or occupational role, but also a life-style, a set of values which could serve as the student's self-image, and toward which he could grow through the commitment of his emotional energies. However, as Robert Paul Wolff points out, certification, ranking, and professional criteria of success invariably intrudes on the educational life of the university, and their effect is almost always destructive. Consequently, Wolff argues, young men and women are required, at precisely the wrong time in their lives, to behave either like little children or like middle-aged careerists. attempt at imagination, flexibility, and experiment must struggle against the extraneous and irrelevant demands of the system for grades, prerequisites, and certificates of "good standing". 6 Christopher Jencks and David Riesman contend that what students really need is a sense that an adult takes them seriously, and indeed that they have some kind of power over adults which at least partially offsets the power adults have In order to be taken seriously, and exercise over them. power, the authors argue, they must, despite their youth, contribute in some way to the adult world. However, the academic enterprise in which professors are engaged seldom excites them,

<sup>6</sup> Robert Paul Wolff, The Ideal of the University, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p.55.

and when it does they seldom find any way to contribute to it, even at the margins. They feel irrelevant and expendable and as far as most scholars are concerned, they are. 7

This desire to be taken seriously is considerably reinforced by the fact that the adolescent, especially those of middle-class background, are accustomed to being listened to.

As Robert Nisbet points out:

Middle-class children do not like the experience of being ignored by their elders, and they do not like the experience of being left alone either. Being alone is a nearly frightening experience for the middle-class child of even college age; and being bored, or easily becoming bored, is a very common experience. One may say that the middle-class child is always on the brink of boredom, saved only by the incessant attention which have been his lot at home. the ever-rising demand on college campuses today for classes of a type that permit not only the strong sense of "togetherness", of youthful community, but also the constant opportunity to be heard, to participate in the planning and the implementation of courses. The middle-class student at college today is affluent generally, but he is psychologically needv.8

In other words, what Nisbet seems to be asserting is that the typical middle-class student, who is overwhelmingly in the majority today on the university campus, is experiencing a profound sense of alienation and moral deprivation.

- 7 Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, <u>The Academic</u>
  Revolution, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), pp.43-44.
- 8 Robert Nisbet, The Degradation of Academic Dogma: The University in America, 1945-1970, (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp.124-125.

His middle-class sensibilities and values, a direct result of familial and peer group socialization, are in a continual state of ambivalence and fluctuation during his university years. In Mannheim's terms, the "transcending impulse", i.e., the experience of discovering new and variant interpretations of the social world, leaves him without a clearly established guideline for patterning his behaviour. As a consequence, morally unambiguous issues such as Negro rights, free speech, and the Vietnam war become a central concern of the student who considers middle-class values to be bankrupt and hypocritical; in some cases, his susceptibility to radical and millenarian ideologies increases.

The disaffected student soon, however, recognizes a curious paradox in his university life, a paradox which in some cases leaves him in an even more precarious and alienated state. That is, the university, which introduced him to the possibilities of conceptualizing social life from a variety of ideological or moral positions, appears, in terms of its underlying rationale and value position, to be in a very fundamental sense inextricably intertwined with the dominant ethical dogma of society at large. On the one hand, its emphasis upon the necessity of certification and grading leaves the student with the impression that the morally crucial issues discussed in the classroom are only of cursory importance and their understanding merely a means to an end,

9 Dogma in this instance is no more than a system of principles or ideals widely believed to be not merely true or right but also beyond the necessity of the more or less constant verification we feel obliged to give so many other aspects of our lives.

i.e., material to be utilized for examination purposes only.

On the other hand, the seemingly intimate relationship between large corporate and military considerations and the university and the general preoccupation of many academics with their own esoteric research interests appears to degrade the priority function of higher education, i.e., teaching.

## The Contemporary University:

Hence, in order to assess the content and consequences of student disaffection, we must by necessity analyze the structure and ideals of the modern university. Nisbet for one 10 considers the university to be in a profoundly critical condition in modern society as a consequence of the dislocative changes during the past quarter-century that have led to the fragmentation of its authority in society and to neardissolution of its internal dogma and community. The central problem, according to Nisbet, has been the betrayal of the university's own ideal, the ideal of the investigation, organization, and contemplation of knowledge for its own sake. historic priorities of the university to preserve an old faith, to proselytize a new one, to train skilled workers, to raise the standards of the professions, to expand the frontiers of knowledge, and to educate the young have been significantly altered in modern times by an incessant scramble by faculty and administrators for government and foundation money, which has led to the building of private empires in the form of research centres, institutes, and projects which, unintention-

<sup>10</sup> Nisbet, op. cit., passim.

ally or not, are anti-university in their effect. In addition, Nisbet argues that the modern university has been plagued by a false individualism, which confuses the ideal of self-realization through the pursuit of knowledge with selfrealization through catering to a variety of personal and emotional needs which the university can make its central concern only by distorting its own ideal. The educator in this instance becomes ambivalent as to the priorities which distinguish his role as an academic - research and business considerations take precedence over the development of his capacity for critical scrutiny based on reason. It is this capacity which, according to Emile Durkheim, distinguishes the academic profession from the "common morality" of the population at large and the rules which determine its duties as a professional enterprise form the highest point of moral ethics. 11

Florian Znaniecki adds that there must be social circles which need and appreciate the academic as a man who cultivates knowledge, not because they can use it to define and solve technical situations or to influence people in social conflicts but for the certainty and completeness of his knowledge itself. The school, furthermore, which represents the institutional setting in which the scholar's role is enacted, performs the specifically social function of an educational

<sup>11</sup> Emile Durkheim, <u>Professional Ethics and Civic Morals</u>, (Routledge & Kegan Paul:London, 1957), p.3.

<sup>12</sup> Florian Znaniecki, The Social Role of the Man of Knowledge, (New York: Octagon, 1965), p.92.

institution only because its main activities are not social but scientific, do not aim to contribute to the maintenance of the social order but to the maintenance of knowledge as a supersocial domain of culture supremely valuable in itself. 13 The academic distinguishes his role as an intellectual precisely in his capacity for detachment from innediate experience, a moving beyond the pragmatic tasks of the moment, and a commitment of comprehensive values transcending professional or occupational involvement. 14

Such a description of the intellectual rationale of higher learning has been endangered by suggestions that the university should simply respond to the demands of powerful agencies, economic and political, in the society outside. In some countries the principal danger arises from political interference; in the United States, although political pressures since the McCarthy period have succeeded in muting social criticism, a more insidious challenge to the independence of the university comes from the influence of the business world. Men of knowledge themselves, as Irving Howe shows, are rarely models of intellectual discipline and enthusiasm but rather are "contaminated by the grossness of utilitarian measurement and the calculations of the business ethic." 15

Drawn into the world of business calculations, scholars have been thrust into the unwonted position of entrepreneurs

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.155.

<sup>14</sup> Lewis Coser, Men of Ideas, (New York: Free Press, 1965), p.viii.

<sup>15</sup> Irving Howe, "Berkeley and Beyond," in M. V. Miller and S. Gilmore (eds.), <u>Revolution at Berkeley</u>, (New York:Dell, 1965), p.xii.

in an incessant search for new sources of capital and revenue.
As Nisbet notes:

Traditionally, much of the dean's or the research committee's prestige and authority had come from the fact that either might have a few thousands of dollars a year to allocate to worthy individuals for their research. Now, through individual entrepreneurship . . . it was possible for almost any astute academic to get his hands on hundreds of thousands of dollars . . . and to do this without regard to the structure of authority in the university. This whole structure, which had once been a help to faculty members, now became in large measure a hindrance. A system of intermediate authority that had been designed, so to speak, to protect academic man from the market place, now seemed to many enterprising research titans an unwarrented invasion of their right to get to the market place. 16

It is within this context that the erosion of the university community has taken place. The traditional authority on which it was based, which rested upon some manifestation of consensus - unwritten, unprescriptive, and drawn from common experience - has been destroyed as a result of the intrusion of new goals and objectives and the impact of external events and forces. The exigencies of a business ethic presuppose the abandonment of values which lie outside its sphere of influence. Consequently, the university has lost its ultimate purpose, the core of its dogma, and with this loss, the student faces an academic community which is no longer coherently educative nor able to elicit a clearly articulated set of moral

and intellectual standards which could alleviate the social and psychological strains of maturation.

One of the architects of this new conception of the university is Clark Kerr, who conceptualizes the academic community in terms of its functions to provide educational services to more and more people, to merge its activities with industry, to rely primarily upon technical expertise as its underlying prerogative, and to become a prime instrument of national purpose. 17 This academic enterprise, referred to as the multiversity by Kerr, simply presupposes that the universities become corporations for producing, transmitting, and marketing knowledge, but in so doing, assumes the loss of their moral and intellectual identity. According to Wolff, when Kerr speaks repeatedly of the multiversity's responsiveness to national needs, he is describing nothing more than its tendency to adjust itself to effective demand in the form of government grants, scholarship programs, corporate or alumni underwriting, and so forth. 18 Kerr's conceptualization, furthermore, assumes that the demands to which the multiversity responds are expressions of genuine human and social needs, needs which make a moral claim upon the effort and attention of the academic community. However, it can be readily discerned that there is a very real difference between the concepts of effective or market demand and human or social need. A human need may be conceived as a desire for something

<sup>17</sup> Clark Kerr, The Uses of the University, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

<sup>18</sup> Wolff, op. cit., p.39.

physical, social or psychological; in regard to students in particular, this need appears to be manifested in their desire for an ultimate purpose and meaning in the social order, for the establishment of a genuine moral and intellectual community. On the other hand, effective or market demand is simply the existence in a market economy of buyers who are in the market place with available capital to be utilized for a particular commodity. To illustrate this distinction, it is possible to interpret Kerr's belief that the nation needs scientists as an endorsement of the space or war industries, where the demand for technical personnel is increasing. other words, a need, according to Kerr, is determined primarily in terms of its usefulness to the national purpose - the national purpose being specifically related to market demand. Consequently, the multiversity is placed in the position of accepting the goals and values of whoever has the money to pay for them. In addition, as an instrument of national purpose, the multiversity can no longer effectively function as critic of the principles and prerogatives of the nation, for, as Wolff points out, an instrument is a means, not an evaluator of ends. 19

In emphasizing the values of rationality and technical expertise, the multiversity becomes unable to support any notion of the unity of knowledge. As Mannheim shows:

. . . it all boils down to the simple principle that the rational recruitment of skilled personnel for large-scale operations requires consistent training and selection. But unnecessary is the over-emphasis on the manipulative aspects of knowledge and the zeal with which institutions have come to train graduates for certification in the mastery of prescribed subjects in the prescribed interpretation. The retailing of knowledge in standard packages paralyses the impulse to question and to inquire. Knowledge acquired without the searching effort becomes quickly obsolescent, and a civil service or a profession which depends on a personnel whose critical impulse is benumbed becomes rapidly inert and incapable of remaining attuned to changing circumstances. 20

Accompanying the subordination of the university to the professed needs of society and the increased emphasis on technical efficiency was the concomitant shift in the areas of responsibility within the academic community itself. R. S. Ratner and R. J. Silvers point out, control over the cultural adjustment of university to society passed out of the hands of the academic establishment (faculty) and became the jurisdiction of a liaison group (administrators) whose chief function was that of securing funds in the interests of meeting the demands of an accelerating technology, of alleviating the problems of the implementation and utilization of concentrated personnel in applied research, and of converting an enormous manpower resource located at the universities into an arm of national defense. 21 As a result of these compromises, academic policy came more and more to be determined by administrators whose hegemony greatly increased in proportion to faculty. Consequently, educators were forced

<sup>20</sup> Karl Mannheim, "The Contemporary Situation of the Intelligentsia," Essays on the Sociology of Culture, op. cit., p.167.

to adapt to the changing circumstances in which they found themselves and were inclined to view the possibilities of their survival and success in terms of a shift from the priority of teaching to the priority of research. As Nisbet shows, the function of project-, or grant-, or institute-based research became the only genuinely valued function; when it became possible to win renown, high salary, and power in the university without more than a kind of token appearance in classroom or seminar. 22 The basic problem seems to be that a conception of the university as a rational and economic organization is inimical to one based on the excellence of knowledge and intellectual creativity. However, it is not to be inferred that research is antithetical to an intellectually-oriented academic community, but simply that there appears to be a necessity for a type of research which is compatible with teaching. It is this possibility which could, to some extent, eradicate the problems accruing from the rationalization of the university.

Apart from the increased emphasis upon administrative responsibility and jurisdiction and the propensity of faculty members toward the pursuit of research interests, the university has been characterized during the past quarter-century by its extreme politicization. The indications of this process included the ever closer relation of the university to the federal government through the multitudinous contracts and

<sup>21</sup> R. S. Ratner and R. J. Silvers, "Three Cultures and the Student Revolution," Paper presented to the CSAA meetings, Toronto, (June, 1969), p.7.

<sup>22</sup> Nisbet, op. cit., p.223.

projects that the universities took on; the dislodgment or erosion of many of the time-created immunities and autonomies of the university within the larger political order; the rising intensity of national political issues assimilated into the halls of the university and made into divisive university political issues; the slowly rising belief on the part of many faculty members that the university must take, as the university, an active role in politics; and the existence of more and more situations incapable of resolution through processes other than those of the adversary relationships of academic litigation, i.e., formalized, more or less bureaucratized, ways of proceeding in curricular and other academic matters, ways that virtually demanded a kind of adversary relationship. 23 As a result, the universities have lost their neutrality as well as the control of their destinies. Matters such as those pertaining to curricula and student conduct, which were considered to be under the auspices of internal university policy, are now responsive to the prejudices and concerns of the political community at large.

The implications of this situation are as varied as they are paradoxical. For example, Richard Hofstadter's historical analysis of the instances of political hostility and opposition to intellectual life has substantiated the thesis that the intellectual's role as a critical observer of the social, political, and moral character of society has been reduced. 24

<sup>23 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.137; pp.146-149.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life, (New York: Vintage, 1963). See also Michael P. Rogin, The Intellectuals and McCarthy, (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1967).

This antipathy culminated in the McCarthy era, for, as a result of its anti-Communist fervour, there was created an atmosphere of distrust and controversy which permeated the academic life of most educational institutions. The rootlessness and heterogeneity of American life, its peculiar scramble for status and its peculiar search for secure identity gave rise, Hofstadter argues, to a form of status politics which tended "to be expressed more in vindictiveness, in sour memories, in the search for scapegoats, than in realistic proposals for positive action." To B. Bottomore adds that another element was the quiescence of the radical intellectuals, which seems to have resulted from a loss of confidence and excessive feelings of guilt about their earlier Marxist, or even liberal, views, when the enormities of Stalinist rule in Russia and in eastern Europe began to be revealed. 26

While anti-intellectualism continued to pervade the academic community and society at large during the 1950s, at the same time intellect took on a new and more positive meaning and intellectuals had come to enjoy more acceptance and, in some ways, a more satisfactory position towards the end of the decade and during the 1960s. As Hofstadter points out, this new acceptance proved to be awkward and confusing to many intellectuals, for being used to rejection, and having over the years forged a strong traditional response to society

<sup>25</sup> Richard Hofstadter, "The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt," in Daniel Bell (ed.), <u>The Radical Right</u>, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1964), pp.83-85.

<sup>26</sup> T. B. Bottomore, <u>Critics of Society</u>: <u>Radical Thought in North America</u>, (New York: Vintage, 1966), p.53.

based upon the expectation that rejection would continue, they came to feel that alienation was the only appropriate and honourable stance to take. 27 What they feared was not so much rejection or overt hostility, with which they learned to cope and with which they came to regard almost as their proper fate, but the loss of alienation.

Many of the most spirited younger intellectuals were disturbed above all by the fear that, as they were increasingly recognized, incorporated, and used, they would begin merely to conform, and would cease to be creative and critical and truly useful. This was the fundamental paradox in their position - that while they did resent evidences of anti-intellectualism, and took it as a serious weakness in our society, they were troubled and divided in a more profound way by their acceptance. 28

The majority of intellectuals, however, overcame their dilemma by becoming "either a henchman of the military-industrial complex or a recluse in an apolitical ivory tower." Faculty members rationalized their subordination to the hegemony of administrators and to the political and social pressures precipitated by anti-intellectualism by declaring an "end to ideology." In essence, this position presupposes that under the prevailing guise of the alleged end of ideology the university functions in such a way as to preserve the ideological status quo. According to S. M. Lipset and Daniel Bell, the

<sup>27</sup> Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life, op. cit., p.393.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Theodore Roszak, "On Academic Delinquency," in Roszak (ed.),
The Dissenting Academy, (New York: Vintage, 1968), p.21.

major cleavages affecting the political stability of American democracy had essentially been solved; therefore, political opposition in the form of a struggle toward a more humane and more rationally organized society was ostensibly unnecessary. The end of ideology protagonists, however, argued that their approach was essentially rational since it did not condemn impartiality and the exploration of ideological alternatives, but merely suggested that such a search would be unavailing. As Ratner and Silvers point out, since this view turns out to be comforting to those who endow the universities with funds for the pursuit of professionalized and technical research, the necessity for drumming the "value- or ideology-free" orientation theme in academic work becomes more pressing. 31

The main effect of overt and strenuous intellectual defenses of this approach was to underline the fact that the advocacy of "value-free" teaching and research was preached within a context in which the ends of the society were taken as given. Pre-occupations were now addressed largely to the discovery and selection of means designed to attain these ends. 32

- See S. M. Lipset, Political Man, (Garden City: Anchor, 1963), esp. pp.439-456; Daniel Bell, The End of Ideology, (New York: Free Press, 1961). For various dissenting interpretations see C. I. Waxman (ed.), The End of Ideology Debate, (New York: Clarion, 1969); Christian Bay, "Politics and Pseudopolitics: A Critical Evaluation," in C. A. McCoy and J. Playford (eds.), Apolitical Politics, (New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1967).
- 31 Ratner and Silvers, op. cit., pp.7-8.
- 32 <u>Ibid.</u>, p.8.

On a more theoretical level concerning the actual content of research itself, eminent scholars, especially in the social sciences, have considered historically and sociologically crucial issues such as underdevelopment, racial inequality, and poverty within the framework of the apparent "value-free" ethic. For instance, Talcott Parsons, in his analysis of the requisite conditions for the development of economically backward nations, has come to view the division of labour and the institutions of capitalism, the representations of the economic status quo associated with liberal democracy, as inherent in, or else universal to, all instrumental 33 sub-systems of every society. Parsons attempts to provide a viable synthesis between the identifying features of capitalism and the necessity of this system of becoming universal to all instrumental sub-systems in all societies by connecting classical economic theory with his conception of the general social system and then showing how this economy, as "the economy", or the adaptive sub-system of society, integrates its boundaries with each of the three other sub-systems, i.e., the polity, as the goal-attainment sub-system, the integrative sub-system, and

"Instrumental" carries the same meaning as "utilitarian" or as "efficient" (as in efficient production and disposal of goods and services). Instrumental actions (hence, actions composing the division of labour) are goal-oriented, but with emphasis upon cost and assessment. The four functional problems in all instrumental systems, according to Parsons are: the problems of disposal (exchange) of goods and services, remuneration, access to facilities, and the problems of collaberation with others.

the pattern maintenance and tension management sub-system. As Mark C. Kennedy argues, by locating classical theory of "the economy" into one of four major sectors of the theory of the social system by a mere adjustment of the "parameters" of that theory and by determining mentally where classical theory relates to or articulates with the theory of the whole is tantamount to accepting classical theory, not only as valid with reference to its accuracy as a theory of capitalism, but also universal to all social systems. 34 This example gives a clear indication of the type of research which assumes the theoretical sophistication of impartial analysis while at the same time accepting the underlying correlates of a liberaldemocratic capitalist economy under the guise of value-neutral-It is as if the Soviet Union were to attempt a dialectical analysis of the ostensible contradictions of modern liberal-democratic societies and claim that it was value-free or "objective".

It is this type of "pseudo-neutrality" which has led social critics, such as C. Wright Mills, to declare that academics conduct their inquiries in a benumbing society without living and working in protest and in tension with its moral and cultural insensibilities. While displaying deference and compliance to the status quo and searching feebly to justify their intellectual conduct, Mills charged them with

- M. C. Kennedy, <u>The Division of Labour and the Culture</u>
  of Capitalism: A Critique of the Institutional Foundations
  of Classical and Contemporary Theories, Ph.D. Dissertation,
  (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1969), p.92.
- 35 C. Wright Mills, <u>The Causes of World War III</u>, (New York: Ballentine, 1963), p.145.

developing a new style of social science research. This new style consisted, on one side, in the elaboration of concepts and categories, without much reference to the problems or investigations in which such concepts might serve a purpose; and on the other, in the refinement of methods of investigation. 36 In a similar vein, Paul Goodman offered a critique of higher education in terms of its failure to represent the ideal of a "community of scholars" and of academics themselves for yielding control of the schools to superimposed administrators of the usual "organization-man" mentality.37 These critiques have, in large measure served as expressions of the concerns and beliefs of students and younger intellectuals and have contributed to the development of a growing disaffection with the organization and purpose of the university. Their function specifically has been to force the university to drop its mask of impartiality, to openly acknowledge the political biases implied by its policies and educational practices, and to confront the problem of deciding how its political orientation should be determined.

The Radical Critique of the Contemporary University:

It is on this basis that student radicalism is to be understood. As Wolff notes, in its fully developed form, the radical critique of the university has consisted of three basic

- 36 C. Wright Mills, <u>The Sociological Imagination</u>, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).
- 37 Paul Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, (New York: Vintage, 1965), and People or Personnel; Like a Conquered Province, (New York: Vintage, 1968).

elements, although its formulation and the implementation of practical proposals have varied enormously: a thoroughgoing criticism of the content and organization of education within the university; an account of the relation of the university as an institution to the other major institutions of society, in particular to the government, to industry, and to the military; and a theory concerning the mechanism by which the first is causally related to the second. First to be attacked was the "in loco parentis" mentality of university administrators which reflected the paternalistic attitude of classical liberal education. According to the dictates of this educational rationale, critical inquiry was to be determined on the basis of the discretion and prerogatives of the instructor; in other words, the authority of the educator to prescribe what was to be learned and how it was to be learned was unquestioned. To many student radicals, this principle was no longer viable or theoretically defensible. Consequently, the eradication of restrictions upon the student's life outside the formal educational process was demanded. Soon to follow were demands that the right to free speech on the campus be acknowledged in practice as well as in theory. Included in their demands as well was the freedom from educational restrictions and requirements which they believed tended to stifle rather than stimulate their interest; freedom from grading to which much of the genuinely educational activity of the campus was subordinated; and freedom from the educator's insistence

<sup>38</sup> Wolff, op. cit., p.44.

that ostensibly irrelevant facts and techniques would prove valuable later in life. One of their most important considerations was that education be meaningful and relevant and be responsive to their needs and the needs of the world.

According to Robert Nisbet, these demands are in certain ways very similar to the demands of a rising number of persons in the whole sphere of religion, after Luther and Calvin, for a faith that was relevant, meaningful, intellectually undemanding, as free from sacrament and works as possible, and committed, not so much to God, much less to Church, but to the imagined needs of the individual human soul. 39 Similar to the Protestant cults which placed the individual serenity of the soul as their highest objective has been the development of silent communion in the forms of sensitivity, encounter, and "feel" courses run by students and the emergence of entire new colleges within universities, even whole campuses, dedicated to alleviating the student's identity crisis and relieving him of his boredom, loneliness, and sense of uselessness. A latent effect of this demand for relevance and the form that it has taken, however, has been its almost anti-intellectual approach to the study of meaningful issues. For example, when radicals talk about justice they do not regard the knowledge of justice as a problem; it is almost inconceivable to them that there be a theoretical questioning of the principle of equality, let alone a practical doubt about it. Freedom of the mind and social criticism is not the outcome of ad hoc generalization, but is the result of an intellectual activity

which is guided by some combination of disciplinary methodologies. As Wolff points out:

A student who reads books devoted to the solution of present problems will learn nothing which can help him to identify and solve future problems. Insofar as he restricts his attention to the application of disciplinary techniques to social problems, he will never learn how to develop new techniques of analysis and criticism. His thought will remain fixated at the superficial level of immediate response to daily events.

Intimately related to the whole notion of the development of a meaningful and relevant education is the democratization of the university itself. In this regard, radicals conceptualize the reorganization of the university in terms of the possibilities of making higher education available to everyone. In responding to these demands, the universities' decision to admit ever greater numbers of students, while temporarily placating growing dissident elements, created a host of new, more explosive problems since advanced education could not readily assure occupational opportunity outside the comparatively tolerant academic setting, nor could the universities themselves readily create the specialized programs needed to accommodate the needs and interests of newly entering groups. The effect of these difficulties was to accentuate the sense of disenchantment and stimulate exploration of ideological alternatives, a movement which spread rapidly even amongst the less disadvantaged students who had recognized both the

<sup>40</sup> Wolff, op. cit., p.79.

relevance and subordination of the university in its relation to sources of support.<sup>41</sup> For change which is conceived with no vision of the purposes of change presupposes the loss of purpose of the university at a time when, paradoxically enough, students are clamoring for meaning and direction.

This lack of conviction and loss of a sense of purpose meant simply that students could challenge the authority of the university and it would respond, either by displaying deference to these demands, or simply by abandoning the legitimacy of its position and referring to the hegemony of civil authority, i.e., the police, military reserves, and so on. weak were the academic's convictions about what a university is that they could find legitimacy only in public approval by their student constituency; their scholarly competence provided no source for independent judgment. Consequently, with the fragmentation of the academic community, students were left in the position of substituting new sources of legitimacy to rationalize their position. The "value-free" preoccupation or "pseudo-neutrality" which permeated the faculty and administration, which in fact appeared to the student radicals as an indication of their lack of conviction, precipitated the curtailment of genuine exploration and the substitution of whatever ideological alternative offered the clearest and most pervasive challenge to the "establishment." A general distrust of intellectualism arose amongst students who lionized activists and revolutionaries, with diminishing regard for the long-range consequences underlying the new manifest-

<sup>41</sup> Ratner and Silvers, op. cit., p.10.

ations of radical social change. As Ratner and Silvers point out:

Rebelling against pseudo-neutrality, but with few guidelines for the establishment of alternatives, students sought profundity for the moment as opposed to superficiality in the long view - often recreating from scratch the grounds for temporary consensus at each moment where collective action was required. . . . The protest strategy has been to arrogate some of the power that now actually resides on the campus and thus become a factor in social change; the principle tactic being to bring the university to a halt - i.e., remove the raison d'etre of the universities by stifling the production of tangible degrees, graduates, research papers, etc. Faculty and administration, given their equivocal posture and tacit commitment to the symbiotic relations now existing between university and society, were politically hamstrung. Unable to submit the de facto ideology to intellectual criticism (no less propose an effective counter-ideology), they had no recourse but to assume a strategy alternating between defensiveness and conciliation in coping with student unrest.42

Ironically enough, this value-neutrality ethic has permeated the thought of student radicals themselves. In positing that purpose and ultimate meaning is to be determined by choice alone, man could adopt any life style or ideology which fit his purposes, since all values are of equal weight. This presupposes in effect that reason, the establishment of rational, scientific analysis, be abandoned in favour of freedom of choice, of discovering means, however irrational, of satisfying

<sup>42 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp.11-12.

certain needs or desires. If reason is in fact superficial, then the irrational must be cultivated for the enrichment of life. Drugs, violence, superficiality become ends in themselves, legitimated by the belief that freedom of choice is unlimited. The irrational, apolitical discourse of a Jerry Rubin finds justification in the value of revolutionary violence for its own sake; 43 the mystical and anti-scientific nature of a Timothy Leary finds support in a notion of a politics of ecstasy. 44

For many students, however, the desire to extrapolate truth from a vast array of seemingly contradictory values espoused in the university as well as other institutional areas has left them confused and disenchanted. For them, a meaningful education is synonomous with the establishment of an academic community where faculty and students alike are responsive to one another in an intellectually conducive and creative atmosphere. Freedom does not necessarily presuppose the eclipse of alienation - Erich Fromm, for instance, has documented numerous arguments for the belief that man is fearful of too much freedom. Unrestricted choice faces the possibility of increased estrangment, for choice, if it is to be meaningful, must be conceptualized on the basis of rational judgment. For some, the only viable alternative has appeared in fundamentalist religion, where millenarian hope is combined

<sup>43</sup> Jerry Rubin, Do It!, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1969).

<sup>44</sup> Timothy Leary, <u>The Politics of Ecstasy</u>, (New York: Putnam, 1968).

<sup>45</sup> Erich Fromm, Escape From Freedom, (New York: Avon, 1965).

with conservative reaction. For others, certification into the dominant culture provides the only viable alternative to the overcoming of a feeling of uselessness and boredom.

For a substantial number of the disaffected student radicals, however, certification necessarily involves a loss of self by the endorsement of the norms and values of the dominant culture. In effect, it represents subservience to large, impersonal and bureaucratized institutions which impose the adults' norms of conformity. To the disenchanted young, hierarchy and impersonality loom as hostile, alien forces against a way of life which, in the context of the university, is still one of comradeship and personalism. Interested in the possibility of extending the rationale underlying these personal relationships beyond his university experience, the student radical voices his protest in his attempt to avoid becoming completely integrated into an existence based on competition and bureaucracy. The content and direction of this protest, however, is often vague and infused with moralism and idealism in short, the search for ideological and practical alternatives represents the most pressing problem the student faces. success of this search depends in large measure on the saliency of his previous experiences - for example, the middle-class student who conceptualizes protest as a means for overcoming his boredom and as a mechanism for receiving attention, would not necessarily perceive his activity as a blueprint for revolution. It is crucial, then, that the disenchantment and alienation of the young be defined against the background of the prevailing cultural milieu and that the class sensibilities of the radicals themselves be explored.

## 5: CONCLUSION

Throughout the preceding analysis, there has appeared an assumption to the effect that youthful revolt, representing a reaction to alienation, boredom, bureaucracy, and anonymity, illustrates a situation which is historically specific and therefore cannot be understood without a corresponding examination of contemporary issues. To the extent that generational conflict, representing a discrepancy between the expectations of the adolescent and those of the adult generation, does not elicit a profound sense of alienation or estrangement, such an assumption cannot be justified. In addition, it has been argued that conflict has become intensified as a result of a changing value system which has come to emphasize technique and efficiency over personal responsibility and community. ideology of technocracy and the corresponding changes in the North American value system has left its populace, especially the young, increasingly pessimistic of the future. Unlike previous generations, as Walter Laquer points out, contemporary North America is now experiencing a loss of optimism despite a rising affluence. 1 Laquer adds that the North American situation is a complicated one, not only because youthful rebellion is accompanied by such factors as a general breakdown of authority, a crisis in the universities, and a widespread sense of cultural malaise, but also because of the response it has elicited in the society at large. That is, previous generations of adults, more certain of their traditions

<sup>1</sup> Walter Laquer, "Reflections on Youth Movements," Commentary, (June, 1969), pp.33-41.

and values, less ridden by feelings of guilt, have shown little patience with a rebellious younger generation.<sup>2</sup>

As a result, generational disenchantment has increased in response to the conviction among the young that their elders have discredited themselves and lost their moral standing. This loss in confidence between generations has correspondingly impelled the young toward resentment and uprising. But this process does not in itself represent a sufficient condition for the widespread estrangement and alienation which exists in contemporary society. We must take into consideration as well the fact that an advanced industrial, prosperous society does not afford an environment with real, objective tasks, material challenges to youthful, aggressive energies. A condition of our affluence is precisely that boredom and a feeling of uselessness ensues as a result of nothing to do. Generational struggle consequently becomes vague, imprecise, and intensely moralistic, leading to the adherence to political radicalism, religious revivalism, drugs as the medium for new experience, communal brotherhood movements, or to various causes which elicit a commitment in a specific direction, such as civil rights and peace and disarmament. As such, the emotional foundation of youth movements, with its will to revolution and its quest for revolutionary experience, is more deep-seated than the young person's particular ideological commitment. As Lewis Feuer points out, it is the state of mind and feeling which impels a person to the revolutionary experience for its own sake; he must feel his energies in grip with the external-

<sup>2 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.39.

ized established order. Thus impelled, a young radical turns from doctrine to doctrine, from cause to cause, ideology to ideology, examining each in series for its emotional suitability and strategic advantage.<sup>3</sup>

This point can perhaps be best illustrated by comparing a student movement to a trade union movement. Feuer notes:

. . . a student movement, unlike a labour movement, has at its inception only a vague sense of its immediate goals; indeed, its "ultimate aims" are usually equally inchoate. A trade union . . . comes into being because a group of workers have certain specific grievances relating to wages, hours and conditions of work, seniority rights, safety precautions. only with difficulty that political propagandists can get workers to think in generic terms of opposing the "system". A student movement, on the other hand, arises from a diffused feeling of opposition to things as they are. It is revolutionary in emotion to begin with, and because its driving energy stems largely from unconscious sources, it has trouble defining what it wants. It tries to go from the general to the particular, and to find a justifying bill of grievances; what moves it at the outset, however, is less an idea than an emotion, vague, restless, ill-defined, stemming from the unconscious.4

Contemporary student movements then, being born of vague, undefined emotions which seek for some issue, some cause, to which to attach themselves, are nonetheless unable to identify themselves with any central exploitation which they experience. Articulate by education but nevertheless relatively free from

<sup>3</sup> Lewis Feuer, The Conflict of Generations, (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p.36.

<sup>4 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.19.

the pressures of economic hardship, the younger generation are frustrated in their affluence by their inability to locate an appropriate object or agent of exploitation. As Feuer adds, when an energy of discontent floats about aimlessly, unable to find a focus for its perceived sense of malaise, it requires an equally ambiguous word, equally devoid of any directional definition, to describe it; such a word is "alienation." The term "alienation" becomes endlessly multi-potential with meanings corresponding to virtually every situation and relationship in which the young person may find himself.

Feeling detached or alienated from the older generation, the young experience the compulsion to give allegiance to absolute ethical conceptions of justice and right, and thereby judge the adult generation and their society in the light of these ethical conceptions. Charles Reich for one identifies the ethical compulsions of the younger generation in terms of their constant emphasis upon personal responsibility and moral right. According to Reich, it is a generation which ostensibly recognizes the contradiction between responsibility and subservience to the technological imperative — in other words, moral conceptions of justice and goodness are incongruent with the technocratic ethos of efficiency and rationality. Responsibility to oneself and to others ostensibly avoids the temptations of a mass consumer society devoid of purpose or ultimate meaning. The overcoming of alienation, in short,

<sup>5 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.508.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Reich, <u>The Greening of America</u>, (New York: Bantam, 1971).

looms as a real possibility in a society where a strong sense of ethical purpose characterizes its inter-personal relationships. It is the necessity of surrendering the egalitarianism of the youth group, the comradship, the friendship, and most of all, his ideals that the young person wishes to avoid. Certification into the adult world necessitates giving up a variety of interests in order to concentrate on a particular job or occupation; as a result, he feels that he must accept an alienation of part of his self. His protest consequently represents a response against the alienation from self which the social system exacts.

However, to the extent that the young person's ethical conceptions of purpose and ultimacy represent an attempt to find emotional sustenance for his feelings of boredom, alienation, and sense of uselessness and concomitantly, to eradicate a feeling of being disprivileged vis-a-vis the social order, then certification into a professional career could alleviate his isolation and through its rewards could lead to the abandonment of his former commitment. In this case the difficult requirements of maintaining a particular ethical position based on often ill-defined and vague principles could be overcome by the assumption of the responsibilities of the adult society.

In this instance, the relationship between earning a living and generational conflict becomes increasingly important in the analysis of youth movements. The general prosperity of contemporary society has alleviated problems of an economic

nature for a significant proportion of young people, especially those of middle-class origin. Consequently, as Feuer notes, generational struggles often arise among those living in relative material comfort and who feel themselves driven by an ethical compulsion. By contrast, the young working-class individual generally directs his emotional energies into the struggle for existence. Feuer adds that the young worker stands already as an adolescent the equal to his father, often earning as much or more. Furthermore, he is not irritated by a dependence relationship prolonged unnaturally into manhood. His grievances are definable and real: low wages, long hours, poor working conditions, fear of unemployment, fear of a life always at the bottom. 7 Tending to dismiss the issues of generational conflict, he diverts his aggressive energies toward the struggle for survival. To the extent, however, that his youthful exuberance overshadows the necessity for earning a living as such, the young worker may channel his resentment toward the open violation of the values and norms of society at large. As Max Flood notes, the young worker's aggressive behaviour may be directed toward the initiation of a wildcat strike, 8 or may take the form of various delinquent acts towards adults as persons or towards social and cultural norms and symbols. The fact remains, however, that the pressure to earn a living often serves as a therapy to serious generational conflict and often minimizes the effects of deviant

<sup>7</sup> Feuer, op. cit., p.32.

<sup>8</sup> Max Flood, "Wildcat Strike in Lake City," <u>Task Force on Labour Relations</u>, No.15, (Ottawa, 1968).

behaviour. As far as parents are concerned, the struggle for existence often serves to resolve their problems of conscience, and make it easier for them to compromise their principles in the name of survival.

Conversely, the competitive struggle for affluence holds no challenge for middle-class youth when they have already achieved a measure of affluence without struggling for it; the customary ways of earning a living are apt to look drab to them. Thus no practical or material concerns stand in the way of a face-to-face confrontation with the anomalies, inconsistencies and the hypocricies with which past generations have The problems of recognizing these inconsistencies and proposing viable solutions to them, however, often remain difficult and full of ambiguities. Youth's ambivalence, which breeds resentment and frustration, often leads to a selfconception of being disprivileged and a concomitant desire for some sort of salvation. In the place of an impersonal cosmic order which appears distant and alien, they look to fundamentalist religion, to ideology, to a communal existence. By the same token, nonetheless, they appear confused as to the dimensions and scope of their protest. For example, the commune people, the student radicals, and the "religious freaks" look upon themselves as ordinary men but at the same time morally and intellectually superior to the remainder of the population. In effect they are collapsing Rousseau's distinction between the common man and the philosopher, i.e., as average citizens they feel themselves guided by a strong sense of civic and moral responsibility which reinforces certain collective

values, but at the same time consider themselves capable of rising above these values as the intellectual or philosopher. Rousseau, however, considered the philosopher to be a man who, by necessity, remained detached and alienated from the cultural dispositions of society at large and could, in no conceivable way, become integrated into its mainstream cultural heritage. A critical observer could not create a communal association with his peers and at the same time conceive of change within or of the system. Consequently, the communes have experienced difficulty in maintaining their ethical beliefs while at the same time developing practical proposals for organization and self-maintenance. Some have attempted to substitute drugs as a means for rising above the common values of society but their programs for change have led nowhere.

These youthful attempts to discover an ultimate truth and purpose are perhaps symptomatic of a society in which ideology has declined, as Lipset and Bell suggest. Karl Mannheim has noted that the alleviation of social tension which accompanies the decline of ideology and utopia invariably leads to one of several adaptations: affiliation with the radical left; scepticism and disenchantment; a refuge in the past which "through a romantic reconstruction seeks to spiritualize the present"; or a renunciation of a direct participation in the historical process. If by a decline in ideology we mean a decline in optimism or faith in the future, then the various dimensions of youth protest in contemporary society become more intelligible. In David Riesman's terms, suburban life

<sup>9</sup> Karl Mannheim, <u>Ideology and Utopia</u>, (New York: Harvest, 1936), pp.248-263.

represents not so much conformity as aimlessness 10; in Durkheim's words, the young have nothing in the past as a comfort aginst the present's affliction, for the past was nothing to them but a series of hastily experienced stages. 11 Since youth have no basis for choosing one direction over another, the final alternative is to lapse into that dark inertia which is just beneath the neon surface of North American life. In attempting to escape from that inertia, youth's actions are directed toward the extrapolation of some meaningful alternatives from a cosmic universe which offers little escape from their boredom, alienation, and sense of uselessness.

<sup>10</sup> David Riesman, "The Suburban Sadness," in William M.
Dobriner (ed.), The Suburban Community, (New York: Putnam, 1958).

<sup>11</sup> Emile Durkheim, <u>Suicide</u>, Trans. by G. Simpson, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1951).

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