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CHAPTER FORTY

The Human Prospect

The human prospect today is both brighter and darker than it has ever been in the historic ages. For the first time, mankind exists as a self-conscious collective entity, bound together by communication at the speed of light, and by transportation at the speed of sound; we command physical powers that were once locked in the depths of nature, and knowledge enough in every department of thought, if we had the good will and the social imagination to use it, not merely to free the race from the old threats of starvation and destitution, but to give to every human being on the planet the cultural resources for personal development and enjoyment that only a minority ever participated in on any scale in the past.

But at present these happy prospects are heavily overcast by well-justified fear and dismay. The method of thinking that has made these advances possible, and the very technology that has brought them to the point of realization, are at the same time working in precisely the opposite direction. As our machines become more automatic, more intelligent, more self-governing, the life that they make possible in our communities becomes humanly less interesting, partly because we have transferred so many of our activities, even thought itself, to these mechanical agents. What is just as bad, the whole apparatus of power on which we necessarily depend has gotten out of control and is running away with us. As a result we have only replaced the old slavery of production with the new servitudes and compulsions of consumption; and in comparison with the power and resources now at our disposal, the net human gain has been dismally small.

At any moment all our boasts of scientific proficiency and progress may be nullified by planetary calamities brought on by minds that have ceased to be able to deal with organic and social realities because they themselves are encased in a system of abstractions useful only for the control of machines. Thus our power threatens to collapse into impotence—our creativity into total destruction.

I shall not end on this negative note; but it is necessary to begin here;

for unless we take the full measure of the dangers that confront us, with open eyes, we shall not summon forth the human energies that will be necessary to overcome them. The threat of wholesale nuclear extermination, on a scale that might permanently mutilate even that part of the human race which escaped immediate destruction, is only the most spectacular example of the negative results produced by science and technics when they are divorced from any other human purpose than their own propensity to increase knowledge and power, and expand the use of their own special products in a fashion profitable to the producer.

But we are in the midst of other explosions, other forms of destruction, actual, not just threatened, that will be just as fatal as long as they go in the present fashion: the population explosion, the freeway explosion, the recreation explosion, the suburban explosion (or should one say the "slurban" explosion?) are all working toward the same blank goal—that of creating more and more featureless landscapes, populated by more and more featureless people. Never before has any country possessed such a surplus of wealth, energy, food, and natural resources as the United States, and in particular, the state of California. But in addressing ourselves solely to the increase of power, profit, and prestige, we have failed to develop a varied, many-sided culture, a culture based on the realities of life itself, on human growth in a biologically sound and socially stimulating environment, on sexual maturation and a good family life, on disciplined emotional expression in the arts and in daily practice, on constant citizen participation in the public affairs of the community, for the sake of human association as well as for the practical and cultural ends. Rather, all our dominant forces today now tend to cramp and dwarf our life, to automatize and increasingly dehumanize our activities, when they might be hugely increasing our actual wealth and our real enjoyment.

Now, where the machine takes precedence of the man, and where all activities and values that sustain the human spirit are subordinated to making money and privately devouring only such goods as money will buy, even the physical environment tends to become degraded and inefficient. To say that we have not made the most of our opportunities is putting the case mildly: disorder, blight, dingy mediocrity, screaming neon-lighted vulgarity are spreading everywhere, producing, as I said, an empty life, filled with false vitality expressed in occasional outbreaks of violence and lust, either in brutal action or in more frequent fantasy.

Ever since I visited the ancient Italian town of Pompeii, buried under the ashes of Vesuvius in A.D. 79, I have found myself comparing the dead city that has been brought to light there with the seemingly live cities that we are living in—or more often trying to get away from—in America. This comparison continues to haunt me. The landscape around Pompeii is not too different from that of many parts of California; the vineyards and the olive groves and wheat fields in Roman times were no more productive. Yet

this little provincial town, of some twenty-five thousand inhabitants, produced such an orderly and coherent and esthetically animated life that even in its ruined state it gives a less ruinous impression than the central areas of most American cities of ten times that population. The Pompeian frescoes and mosaics are famous in the museums of Europe, and when one compares the noble Forum of Pompeii with the jumbled junk-edged surroundings of San Francisco's own Civic Center, when one considers the amount of space and fine building given to Pompeii's temples, its markets, its law courts, its public baths, its stadium, its handsome theater, all conceived and built on the human scale, with great nobility of form, one realizes that American towns far more wealthy and populous than Pompeii do not, except in very rare cases, have anything like this kind of civic equipment, even in makeshift form.

Closer comparisons make our own achievements seem even more destitute and fraudulent: the neighborhood bakeries of Pompeii still made real bread, with flour ground on the premises just before baking—not the kind of devitalized foam-rubber loaf, laden with additives and substitutes, mechanically sliced for built-in staleness, that boasts of never being touched by human hand, though if we were not so enamored of large-scale enterprise and long-distance transportation, we could all have fresh local bread, with flour ground on the spot by small, efficient, electrically driven mills, bread fully the equal of Pompeii's, without the slave labor that probably turned the Pompeian baker's mill.

Every part of Pompeii was within walking distance, just as if its inhabitants enjoyed each other and wished to profit by each other's company. And the thousands of people who gathered to watch the games, or attend the theater, could leave their seats and reach home on foot before a similar American crowd could begin to get their cars out of a parking lot. In terms of biological vitality, in terms of social life, there is no question as to which kind of community could offer the best facilities and enjoyments for its inhabitants. Now, mind you, Pompeii was not a showpiece or an ideal community; far from it: it was just an ordinary Roman provincial town, so well designed that were it not for Vesuvius it might still be doing business on the same spot, within the same general pattern of life, as is so largely true today in the old Roman colonization towns, like Piacenza and Pavia.

The moral I draw from Pompeii is that we Americans must be spending our money on the wrong things if our towns are so poverty-stricken in civic facilities, so confused, and so ugly by contrast, in spite of all their boasted wealth and energy. What Pompeii spent on the vital contents of life, we spend on wasteful processing and meretricious packaging and phony publicity. Our trouble, then, is not merely that we have fallen in love with the machine, and have treated it as a god, to be flattered with prayers and propitiated by human sacrifices—more than 59,000 dead by motor accidents every year: over three million injured, many of them maimed for life. (Latest 1972 figures).

Our trouble is that equally we have ceased to respect ourselves, just as we have ceased to love our neighbors and want to be near them; we have ceased to cherish our own history and to enlarge our own prospects, by promoting character and variety and beauty wherever we find it, whether in landscapes or in people. Because the machine, if left to its own special devices, money and power, goes in for standardization, mass production, automation, quantitative excesses, we have let our lives be governed by these same mechanical factors. So we constantly forget that all these capacities are beneficial only when they are at the disposal of a purposeful life that is itself more rich, complex, varied, individualized, stimulating, and humanly valuable: something different from a machine's existence.

In their worship of the machine, many Americans have settled for something less than a full life, something that is hardly even a tenth of a life, or a hundredth of a life. They have confused progress with mechanization, and, lacking any will or purpose of their own, having lost any real religious faith or personal pride, they have let mechanization take command. Even where choice is possible, they prefer an air-conditioning unit to the more subtle and satisfactory method of controlling insulation and temperature by proper orientation, and by using trees and gardens more copiously. They respect the steam shovel that levels down a hill more than they value the view that their houses would command if they kept the hill and used its contours. The speculative builder prides himself on the bulldozer that gouges out a stand of trees while he rejects opportunity for a more organic type of plan that would group the houses in a more adroit irregular pattern. These bad habits make it seem as if our countrymen were hostile to all manifestations of life, including their own, except in so far as they enhanced the power and glory of machines.

Some of this attitude is doubtless left over from the pioneer days, when the individual settler had to carve a place for himself barehanded in a sometimes difficult, if not inimical, environment. Under these conditions a certain ruthlessness was sometimes unavoidable in self-defense. At all events the pioneer never had to live with the damage he did, as we do now: he could always cancel out his sins, or at least forget them, by moving on to another virgin spot. Even when the pioneer didn't rape Nature, he divorced her a little too easily: he missed the great lesson that both ecology and medicine teach—that man's great mission is not to conquer Nature by main force but to co-operate with her intelligently and lovingly for his own purposes. Yet for all our careless habits, we Americans once loved the wilderness, for the free mode of life and the self-reliant men and women it bred: whatever is left of adventurous initiative and self-government in this country owes a debt to those days.

Since in our hearts we don't altogether like the kind of mechanically sterilized and spiritually stupefying existence we now live, we have begun to tell ourselves fairy stories about our present state: fooling ourselves into believing we are recovering the old pioneer spirit with barbecue grills in the

backyard, just as we call the most compulsive and tension-producing avenues of locomotion our 'freeways'—and even boast of the freedom of going at sixty miles an hour for hundreds of miles and never having to stop for a red light, completely forgetting how often we are stalled for ten minutes at a bottleneck, as we creep into the city. So again in attempting to fill up the empty hours of leisure that our mechanical achievements have brought about, we tend to turn every great recreation area into a congested metropolitan slum, pretending to find solace in the beauties of nature, at Yosemite or Lake Tahoe, in an actual environment that strangely resembles a parking lot around a hamburger joint. *If the places where we live and work were really fit for permanent human habitation, why should we spend so much of our time getting away from them?*

Let us face the truth. The real life of a large part of the population, even those who live in agricultural areas, is one long retreat from the vitalities and creativities of a self-sustaining environment and a stimulating and balanced communal life. We have accepted an assembly line existence, in which all human functions take place in an increasingly sterilized and uniform environment, cut off from every reality except that which serves the machine. Whether he wears a white collar or a blue collar, the typical American now serves as a baby-sitter to a machine, or is geared into a collective organization that is itself a more formidable and all-embracing machine—a machine that can be run effectively only by bureaucratic personalities, punched and coded to perform a limited set of operations. The factory or the office, with its thousand identical windows, its uniform air conditioning, its uniform fluorescent lighting, its equally bare and uniform parking lot, has the typical features of this age: faceless anonymity. As far as it is mechanically feasible, this environment has insulated its occupants from every form of reality except the machine process itself: heat and cold, day and night, the earth and the stars, woodland, crop land, vineland, garden land—all forms of organic partnership between the millions of species that add to the vitality and wealth of the earth—are either suppressed entirely from the mind or homogenized into a uniform mixture packaged for sale.

Look at the life we lead. At the end of a day our countrymen leave this humanly insulated collective environment for an equally cribbed and cabined mechanism on wheels, for a journey that may take anywhere from half an hour to two hours, depending upon how filled the parking lot is and how clogged the freeway. This piece of defective rolling stock, with its lethal, health-vitiating exhaust, provides the fading illusion of freedom along with the reality of constant tension and constraint: its utility decreases in direct proportion to its mass use, and in taking over the burden of public and private transportation, both passengers and freight, the motorcar has, with the aid of extravagant public subsidies, under pretext of "national defense," wrecked the balanced transportation system that existed a generation ago, and crippled the functions that the motorcar and the freeway, if part of a

more complex and flexible network of transportation, would actually—and admirably—serve.

Physiologically the worse for wear, our American finally reaches his dwelling, where he finds a house and a wife in the midst of what is usually called ideal suburban surroundings: a green ghetto, half natural, half plastic, also cut off from human contact, where his wife has for her chief daily companions in her solitude the radio set, the soap opera, the refrigerator, the automatic mixer, the blender, the vacuum cleaner, the automatic washing machine, the dishwasher, and, if she is lucky, the second car. They and their children finally, together or by turns, immobilize themselves before a television screen, where all that has been left out of the actual world, all their un-lived life, flickers before their eyes, in images that give a faked sense of the realities they have turned their backs to, and the impulses that they have been forced to repress. Even here, the machine-conditioned American has no proper life of his own: for what he sees and hears and interprets contains only so much of the real world as the great corporate organizations, military, commercial, political, which control this medium, will permit for the furtherance of their own machine-expanding, power-buttressing, or money-making ends. Freedom of selection is chiefly the freedom of choosing more of the same from another channel.

I have of course intentionally, and doubtless grossly, caricatured the life of the representative American today; and I am as well aware as you are of the many happy qualifications and modifications that make much of it bearable, and some of it positively rewarding.

For all this, that caricature is too near reality to let one feel altogether comfortable about the human prospect: especially since it is fast becoming the universal life of mankind, alike in other countries that still call themselves free, and in countries that are under a Communist Party dictatorship. In the latter countries, indeed, people are resentfully aware of the official pressures and external compulsions, and therefore, if one may judge by recent short stories and motion pictures coming out of Soviet Russia, they have reacted against their oppressive political regimentation by cultivating a warmer sense of the eternal human decencies and moralities, as between family and family, person and person. Few of our own Hollywood or Radio City productions show anything like the same human tenderness as the recent Russian 'Ballad of a Soldier.'

At all events, the ultimate pattern of gracious American living, if we continue our rigid and unqualified commitment to the machine, is already in sight. Six hours for automatic production and forced consumption in order to maintain the expanding economy: three hours for transportation as we get farther and farther away from the place where we don't want to work, to the place where we no longer have much opportunity to sleep: six hours for mechanized togetherness, sometimes called family life and recreation: and finally, at least nine hours of sleep, partly to forget that we have not

been living, partly to provide for the increasing sale of sleeping pills, hypnotics, and tranquilizers, those indispensable adjuncts of the kind of life we offer to our highly mechanized and urbanized population. The only element I have left out of the day's schedule is mating: but plainly, with artificial insemination from a bank of frozen sperm cells, in accordance with Dr. Herman Muller's formula for human improvement, this injection can be combined with an influenza shot or an X-ray checkup. So much for the nightmare of our 'Brave New World': we are lucky if what we see when we move about and what we do in our day's work turns out to be sufficiently different to reassure us that we are awake.

Isn't it about time that we took a hard second look at this life of ours and faced the fact that if we go on acting this way, the human prospect will be increasingly dismal? Are we creating the kind of life that anyone in his senses would bargain for, still less regard as the sufficient consummation and justification of civilization? Sinclair Lewis took such a look at Zenith and Main Street a generation or more ago; but what he found there was relatively healthy, sweet, decent, and sane compared with the kind of life that has been thrust upon us by the automatic proliferation of scientific invention and mechanical organization during the last twenty years. The human prospect, in California or anywhere else, does not hold much promise as long as these conditions are unrecognized for what they are, not real signs of progress, but symptoms of human disturbance and social disintegration; or, even when they are recognized, if they are looked upon as outside human control, and are allowed to go on uncorrected. The time has come to understand that mechanization without a corresponding humanization is monstrous: just as passive consumption, without selectivity and without any ensuing creativity in other departments than science and technics, is empty; and power without purpose—the kind of power we now have in such abundance, power enough to exterminate the human race—is immediately destructive and suicidal, and ultimately impotent.

If you ask me how California or any other region can be improved without altering our prevailing view of life, without changing our routines, without attaching ourselves to more public purposes and higher human ends than those we now respect, I must answer with a sad smile that no serious improvements are possible on those old terms. If we want to improve the regional environment, we must also improve ourselves, that is, we must change our minds and alter our objectives, advancing from a money economy to a life economy: in many matters we must acquire new values, new sensitivities, new interests, new goals that will ensure a self-sustaining, many-sided life. That life must not depend as it so largely does now upon our constantly dancing attendance upon the machine, and pursuing only such activities as will give the makers of machines and machine products the maximum market for their goods.

In short, it is the whole pattern of our life that must change; and the

pattern of our local life will not alter significantly until the over-all pattern for a much wider area does. As long as our country spends astronomical sums for weapons of extermination, weapons which endanger our own lives—sixty million dead on the first day of a nuclear attack—and indeed the lives of all mankind, quite as much as they threaten any enemy's, we shall not have the funds needed for more rational public purposes: for our schools and hospitals, for our theaters and churches, for our recreation areas, for the old and the young who need public help.

Part of our local planning, then, must be deliberately framed to bring the local community into relations with larger associations of peoples, if only in order to safeguard the very life we are building here; and one of the most ominous items that appeared in the paper the other day was the report that a chapter on the United Nations was being excluded from an official textbook on civics in California. I hope that report was unfounded, for if California is still populated a hundred years hence, it will be because the universal forces for co-operation and mutual understanding embodied in the United Nations, not least in UNESCO, have prevailed over egoistic, nationalistic presumptions and nuclear delusions of absolute power. If the world overcomes the irrational forces that are now undermining human culture everywhere, forces long embodied in the dangerously obsolete institution of war, it will be because people everywhere realize that all the goods of life are the joint product of the human race as a whole, and that we are bound to all our neighbors by all the facts of history and by the hopes of the future, as they are bound to us.

The kind of co-operation that still exists between all nations in the world of science and scholarship—at least that part of science and scholarship that is not under the control of totalitarian military agencies operating in secret—sets a pattern for the future relations of regions and countries: so much so that the core institution in every vital city today is no longer the palace or the temple or the market, but the university, and it is to the honor of the university that such an open discussion as is going on here today is possible in contrast to the death-oriented doctrines and isolationist nonsense taken as a prescription for "national survival."

In discussing the role of planning we all too easily get lost, however, in details of political organization, economic support, population movements, transportation facilities, metropolitan or regional government; and we neglect the factor that is central to all of these things: the dimensions of the human personality. The answer to the problems of human organization and human control will not come from computers; the answers will come from men. And it will not come from the sort of men whom we have indoctrinated with the myth of the machine: the disoriented experts and specialists whose uncoordinated and lopsided efforts, uncorrected by the more humane wisdom of their peers, and untutored by historic experience, have produced the overmechanized, standardized, homogenized, bureaucratized life that now surrounds us increasingly on every side.

Our first job in controlling the forces that are now working such destruction and havoc in every regional community is to cultivate men who are capable of exercising this control: proud, confident, self-respecting, co-operative men. Not men for sale, men tailored and trimmed to fit the machine, but men capable of using all their powers, taking back to themselves the functions they too easily resigned to the machine, and projecting human goals, in the full trajectory of life, goals which they often disregarded in their eagerness to exploit some immediate opportunity. If our mode of life or our education had produced such men in sufficient numbers, we should not now be living in an increasingly denuded and life-hostile environment; and if we are ever to give to this region, or any other region, the life-sustaining richness and variety that are possible, even in areas where natural conditions are unduly uniform or climatically difficult, we will have to begin all over again at the very beginning, with the infant in its crib. That is where education starts.

Let us consider the most limited environment. If we look at it carefully, we shall perhaps have a key to what must be done in every other area. Consider the newborn baby of the last generation, my own and the generation immediately after my own. Our mechanized civilization, in the interest of a speedy delivery, at the convenience, even at the timed participation of the physician, often endangered mother and child with impatient interference in the natural process, and too often compounded this mistake by anesthetizing the mother completely. All too soon, as a result of scientific pride over inventing a formula for feeding independent of the natural source of milk, the child was parted from its mother and deprived not only of mother's milk, but of the experience of a warm, loving, commensal relationship with her, the kind we must have also with Mother Earth.

In other words, both mother and child were cut off from a basic physical and spiritual experience, an experience which is a vital model for all remoter forms of co-operation and association. When behaviorist doctrines were at their height the next point in the child's development consisted in a systematic effort to make clockwork habits take the place of organic responses timed to the organism's own needs, especially in bowel training. Thus, as one of our most able child psychologists, Erik Erikson, has pointed out, before an American child was three—this held with his patients at least up to 1950—he had been conditioned to accept an external mechanical order as absolute, and to believe that there was nothing he could do to change it, particularly if he wanted to win the approval of those who stood in authority over him. Such a training made bad citizens for a democracy; but it fitted admirably, with its mechanical punctuality and regularity, with its human docility and conformity, into larger bureaucratic and totalitarian systems.

While many of the present generation of young people are, happily, beginning to reject every part of this process, beginning with the young mothers and enlightened physicians who accept childbirth as a normal organic

process—it can take place in a home, though nowadays it too often takes place in a taxicab or a car on the way to a distant hospital—not as a surgical ordeal like a major operation. In justified reaction against the mechanical regimen that prevailed a generation ago, some of the young have even reacted to the opposite extreme, quite naturally, an extreme of heedless permissiveness and irresponsibility, thus abdicating the parental role and turning the infant itself into a tyrannous monster, subject to all the psychological disorders that befall every creature that has delusions of absolute power, devoid of purpose but endowed with every attribute of freedom except the ability to select a path and follow it. If you look closely at these two patterns of child training—one too rigorous, too machine-dominated, too overstrained, the other too feckless and reckless to pay attention even to the natural rhythms of the body and natural hierarchies of power and responsibility—you will perhaps have a clue to the characteristic weaknesses of planning today.

On one hand we have the compulsiveness and arbitrariness of our highway planning, our urban renewal projects, our overcentralized and overcrowded recreational facilities, in which the demands of the administrator, the investor, the engineer ruthlessly override the human needs to be served and deform the final product, making it really unfit for human use. But against this you have the unlimited permissiveness of suburban sprawl; and along with both tendencies an attitude of hopeless passivity, based on the curious assumption that although all these mischievous and maladroit activities are the result of human actions and human plans, they are beyond human control, once they are in existence, and are doomed to get worse and worse. This is nonsense. I would challenge that assumption, even were it necessary to wait for a whole generation of new young people to emerge—a generation who have come into the world without having to submit to an overmechanized, oversterilized, deliberately anti-organic regimen that has no faith in either life or love.

We shall never succeed in dealing effectively with the complex problems of large units and differentiated groups, unless at the same time we rebuild and revitalize the small unit. We must begin at the beginning; it is here that all life, even the life of big communities and organizations, starts. The home and the neighborhood are an integral part of the region, and some of the most pressing problems in adequate land use cannot be solved, with the big population that is flooding into California, unless we handle the whole pattern of settlement, including the layout of the individual houses and apartment units. The child has a right to live in an orderly, intelligibly patterned world, scaled to his size and his capacity for movement, and designed for encouraging his activities, and for making him feel at home with his fellows and neighbors, even when he leaves his domestic nest.

If we are to recapture the initiative from our machine-centered civilization, we must establish a life-centered environment from the moment of birth. Who can pretend that a fifteen-story, high-rise apartment in an urban

renewal project is such a family environment? But neither—let us not fool ourselves—is an insulated single family house, entirely cut off from its neighbors, or lined up, side by side, for the convenience of the builder and the deed of sale, on a long uniform street, one mechanically uniformed unit after another. Neither of these environments serves as a surrogate for the mother or as a proper sample of a bigger community.

Every housing development should have the virtues of both a village and a kindergarten; the houses themselves should form a protective enclosure, so that the child can move about freely, among other children, and still be under the eye of his mother, or, rather, a whole group of mothers, safe from moving traffic, not having to share his play space with a motorcar or be toted a mile or two by car to find it. Real human communities must preserve social as well as visual variety; hence the fact that we no longer attempt to house a three-generation family within a single dwelling makes it all the more imperative to restore this combination to the neighborhood. Age segregation is just as bad as income segregation or racial segregation: we need mixed age groups to sustain life even at the simplest levels. A child needs grandparents, or substitute grandparents, as well as parents; he needs to live in a normal human community with the companionship of other children—of different ages, too—as well as those of his own peer groups and family.

None of these things happens automatically nowadays on any scale: automatic processes tend to produce isolation and segregation, not the complex social pattern produced by integrating in appropriate structures and forms a whole variety of human needs and functions. Nor can the benefits of such an integrated social design be produced by private individuals, no matter how great their financial means. Public authorities must take the lead in experimenting with new urban patterns, new layouts: they must seek to establish a tradition that the individual developers—perhaps with public assistance—can themselves carry out, instead of, as now, following the line of least resistance, which always is a mechanical repeating pattern.

I have taken this simple illustration to show how many-sided the organic planning process is, even at the smallest scale, when you understand and attempt to do justice to human needs. What I have said of housing alone applies in equal degree to the neighborhood, which must be built again into an active political unit, if our democracy is to become active and invigorated once more, as it was two centuries ago in the New England village, for that was a superior political unit. The same principles apply again to the city and the interrelationship of cities in a unified urban and regional network or grid. But I have used this illustration of how to give order, variety, and protection to the growing child for still another reason; and that is because it offers a model of the chain of relations that bind the small unit to seemingly remote parts of the environment and to problems which seemingly have nothing to do with it.

Already you have let the pressure of population and of private real

estate development destroy some of your best agricultural land. Even here in the broad Central Valley, you are threatened with this evil, no less than in the Santa Clara Valley and the San Bernardino Valley, valleys whose orchards and vineyards not merely gave character to their little towns, but had positive recreational value for the bigger cities like Pasadena, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. That soil was precious; that combination of agricultural production and recreative beauty were essential to the vitality of the whole urban community; and by packing these valleys with a disorganized overload of people and vehicles you have even been lowering the health levels with smog and carbon monoxide, as recent official reports show. This random scattering of population has spoiled both the urban and the rural potentialities of these valleys: whereas if you had thought of housing in direct communal terms, to begin with, the care of the child and provision for the child's healthy growth in his family and neighborhood, you might have built two- or three-story houses instead of the low sprawling ones of a single story, a type that is now eating up land all over the country, and you might have doubled, and in many cases quadrupled, the number of people per acre, with an enormous improvement in their social and domestic environment.

By proper planning alone, you could have preserved from fifty to seventy-five per cent of the land now misused and wasted. Indeed, by means of proper planning you may still save much precious land, which is now about to be misused, from such a fate. At a residential density of from fifteen to thirty families per acre—fifteen to twenty families is the usual density in the spacious, perhaps even too spacious English New Towns—you could have provided better gardens, better playgrounds, safe green walkways to school, more accessible schools for the children, and a far better life for the parents as well: a life designed deliberately to favor the neighborly interchange of services that must become, as once it was in pioneer days, our communal substitute for menial helpers that hardly anyone can now afford to hire. Not the least advantage of such organic communal neighborhood designs is that they would release the individual housewife and mother from the slavery of her present twenty-four-hour tour of duty.

This illustration has many ramifications; but its chief use today is to indicate that respect for human conditions and for development and growth will help improve every part of the regional landscape, and will make possible a complex interlacing of functions, in a pattern of mutual aid, not mechanical regularity, that will be superior to any one-sided solutions, based on single-factor analysis and compartmental thinking devoted mainly to the exploitation and profitable use of the machine.

But before the kind of thought and design I have indicated becomes popular, we shall have to overthrow the myth of the machine and replace it with a new myth of life, a myth based upon a richer understanding of all organic processes, a sharper insight into man's positive "role in changing the face of the earth," and a passionate religious faith in man's own capacity

to transform and perfect his own self and his own institutions in co-operative relation with all the forces of nature, and, above all, with his fellow men. To put all our hope in the improvement of machines is the characteristic inversion and perversion of values of the present age; and that is the reason that our machines threaten us with extinction, since they are now in the hands of deplorably unimproved men. This is no moment to fight a rear-guard action, a mere delaying action, against the forces that are denuding the landscape and dehumanizing the capacities of men. The time has come for bold counterattack—and we may not have long to wait.

During the last three years I, like many of my colleagues, have noted a new generation coming into the colleges: a generation trained perhaps more lovingly than their rigid and passive predecessors. They are no longer cagey conformists, no longer bent on dodging all the adventurous possibilities of life by an overemphasis on security, measured in income, or in status, measured only by the things money will buy. These young people, sometimes at great sacrifice, put babies ahead of careers; and they find, in themselves and their family life, resources that are not found in machines and are often deplorably lacking in the bigger community itself, lacking especially in the big cities. Though they have grown up in an age of violence and totalitarian conformity, they now challenge its brutalities and reject its compulsions; and their respect for themselves is greater than their respect for anything the machine, with or without their help, has created. They are still in all probability a minority; but the seed of life has ripened in them: if their elders do not betray them by surrendering even more abjectly than they have already done to the forces of disintegration and extermination, this generation will assume responsibility that too many of us still shrink from. They will overcome our passivities, overthrow our regimentations, and place the guardians of life once more in command. This is still an uncertain promise: but at least—and at last—it opens up a human prospect.

(1962)