

executive directors. People like to see their donations utilized in active causes." How did the CHUL choose which of many "active causes" Harvard students were to be encouraged to contribute to? "Members of the Harvard community have long felt that they have been abusing the urban area which surrounds the University. The Combined Charities Drive is one of the few ways that students at Harvard can give something back to the community." The CHUL chose to "solicit for those organizations which are too actively involved in their own cause to go out and raise funds themselves."

The CHUL selected five such busy community organizations, each of which was given a few paragraphs in the pamphlet to describe itself and make its plea for money (the students could either have their money evenly distributed among the five, or could specify a recipient). One of the five organizations selected was predictable: Harvard's own social help organization, the Phillips Brooks House, which is involved in a variety of programs such as teaching prisoners, helping poor people renovate their apartments, and the like. The other four organizations to receive money from the Combined Charities Drive were:

The Harvard-Radcliffe Association of African and Afro-American Students. "The Association's goal has been to promote mutual understanding and friendship among ourselves...The main theme of Afro this year is unity. Our main project to further this cause is a Coffee Shop-Grill."

Education for Action (E4A). "...a student-run organization which has been helping undergraduates involved in social change...We annually fund thirty to forty Harvard-Radcliffe undergraduates for an average of \$350 each." E4A serves as a clearinghouse at Harvard for literature on "alternatives to education, women's consciousness, prison work, counter-professions, consumer's rights, Appalachia, ecology, vocations for social change, communes." E4A's other main activity is "workshops": "This fall we have sponsored informal talks by the Law Commune and by a Radcliffe Institute Fellow on Franz Fanon, as well as a videotape of Dr. Joshua Horn on medical work in China."

United Farm Workers. Money is needed for "The farmworkers' efforts to gain self-determination."

Hard Times. This Cambridge organization's activities include organizing tenants into unions and producing a "community newspaper." Hard Times "will provide leadership around community issues. Through these issues we hope to develop a real working-class political consciousness in the Cambridge area."

Now it should be evident that none of these organizations (excepting the Phillips Brooks House) is a charity—and in fact, none describes itself as a charity. Afro and E4A are organizations of Harvard students who deal mainly (in E4A's case, only) with other Harvard students; calling a Coffee Shop-Grill or grants for Harvard students charitable purposes, and implying that giving money to Afro or E4A would be "giv(ing) something back to the community" is a bit far-

fetched. The UFW is a union, perhaps a somewhat special one, but certainly having little to do with the Cambridge urban community Harvard is "exploiting." Hard Times is a political organization. But of course all have, at least implicitly, mostly explicitly, the "proper" political position. This seems to have been a considerably more important criterion for selection for the Combined Charities than whether the organizations were in fact charities.

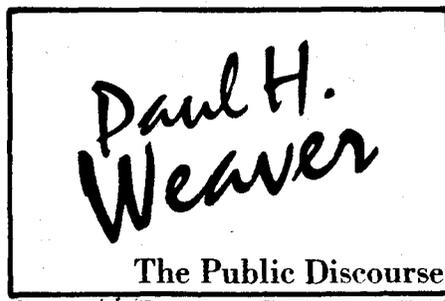
One does not know whether to laugh at, cry over, or be nauseated by all of this. The whole thing is too trivial and silly to be an outrage, and too transparent to spend much time discussing. But it is distressing. For if the better nature of many Harvard students were tapped, some genuine charities and needy people could benefit. There are many of us who will give if asked or prodded, but who are not likely to take the time to give on our own. An opportunity to coax a few dollars from hundreds of students for charity has been utterly wasted.

Yet the CHUL, who wasted this opportunity, has not been "captured" by any radical minority. As it happens at Harvard radicals boycott all official university committees. CHUL representatives (one from each of the thirteen Houses) are, as far as I can judge, relatively typical Harvard students (insofar as the types who run for a college com-

mittee that makes suggestions to the administration about such things as the correct male-female ratio in the houses are typical). In any case, they are well-meaning people, and far closer to being preppies than Commies. It was this rather ordinary and typical group of Harvard students who selected the Combined Charities.

For the past three years, in a period when Harvard students have never been more genuinely if abstractly "concerned" about and aroused by social problems, there has been no Combined Charities at Harvard. Now, when it returns, it comes back as a vehicle of facile ideological self-gratification. Perhaps many Harvard students spend too much time trying to change the world or talking about changing the world to bother with charities. They may feel they have already far surpassed their quota of righteous behavior, or at least righteous feeling. These students hurry past—sometimes mock—the small Salvation Army contingent in Harvard Square. The Salvation Army does not develop consciousness, create unity, or work for social change. It only helps people. I am willing to wager that its name was never mentioned at the CHUL meeting that chose this year's Harvard-Radcliffe Combined Charities.

William Kristol



CLOSING OUT THE 1960s

As chronological units, decades begin and end at exact points in time; but as historical periods — which is how we usually speak of them — their boundaries are uneven and indistinct. The moods and enthusiasms which define decades slowly drift in and then, after a time, drift out again on the tide of events. One can therefore never be quite certain just when one decade is over with and another has begun. This is especially so because the ideas and the personalities and the pre-occupations which are at the center of a decade never spring into existence *ex nihilo*. Usually they have been around for years and decades prior to their brief popular reign, and after their moment in the limelight they seldom become altogether extinct, but merely retreat to the fastness of this or that isolated nook of society, where they persist more or less indefinitely as remnants of the past—and also as prototypes for the future. This suggests another reason why decades are so mercurial and so hard to demarcate: they can recur. And in fact they do

recur, lending to our political and cultural history the cyclical character noted by Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. Thus, the 1950s had much in common with the 1920s, just as the 1960s bore a strong resemblance to, and in this sense were a replay of, the 1890s and 1910s.

I have just referred to the 1960s in the past tense, as if they were over and done with — but are they really? Or is what we have been witnessing these past few years only a brief lull after which the decade will come roaring back in all its stylish zeal and rancorous energy? The conventional wisdom would seem to be that the sixties are now quite extinct and can be expected to remain so. Partly this view derives from the trendmakers' current interest in divining the distinctive flavor and concerns of the 1970s — an enterprise which can proceed only on the assumption that the sixties have indeed come to an end. But there is more solid evidence as well. The urban riots that be-

(continued on page 21)

The Alternative February 1973



PERSPECTIVE: Gary North

The Perseverance of the Family

PERSPECTIVES is a new Alternative feature, in which articulate spokesmen are given the opportunity to argue the pros and the cons, the highs and the lows, the light and the serious of any significant issue. It should be emphasized that the opinions and values herein expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or The Alternative staff.

Conservatives, almost by definition, are institutionally oriented. They suspect the motives and the sanity of all arm-chair social theorists who proclaim radical human autonomy as the foundation of their social analysis. Individual creativity, and a society's ability to appropriate and use such creativity, require the existence of stabilizing institutional supports. Randomness is a threat to man; he seeks to thwart it in the day-to-day affairs of his life. Randomness, if it is widespread, requires too much capital, both human and material, to deal with it. Scarce economic resources, especially time, are diverted from the task of positive creativity in order to subdue, in a negative fashion, the contingency of life. Therefore, as Robert Nisbet has argued so forcefully in his *Social Change and History*, stability rather than change should be the primary presupposition of sociological analysis. It is the error of modern thought (and has been for three centuries) to elevate change to the position of ultimacy, thus relegating stability into the realm of the abnormal. Stability is the setting of social change, not the other way around.

The standard account of the basic components of society which might appear in any of a hundred conservative analyses would include family, church, and state, generally in that order. Furthermore, subordinate institutional

arrangements, probably more fleeting historically, but of considerable importance to society, are such things as school, business (i.e., occupational calling), fraternal organizations, gangs, or any number of other voluntary associations. Without the emotional stability provided by these associations — which Tocqueville said were so fundamental in American life in the 1830s — men are left to find meaning and purpose as social atoms. The "anomie" of modern industrial life, as Durkheim called it at the end of the last century, results from just this kind of social fragmentation and atomization. The alienation of mankind which so appalled the young Marx — an alienation, within the framework of the Christian philosophy of the West, which stems from the ultimate alienation between God and man — flourished far more easily in the milieu of industrial Europe than it had in the more personalistic culture which had preceded it.

It has been a hallmark of totalitarian parties that ultimate sovereignty has been ascribed to the leader, for it is he who is the incarnation of the spirit of universal meaning (*Volkgeist*, the proletarian class, the forces of history, etc.). The leader is the sole source of temporal meaning, the fountain of power, the source of legitimate change, the touchstone of community. Men participate in community, thus bringing purpose into otherwise autonomous, contingent lives, through the leader and the party. Totalitarian systems deny the validity of alternative institutional sovereignties, for these operate as buffers against central political power. At best, such competing institutions are regarded as derivative sovereignties, drawing legitimacy, power, and meaning from the party and the party's state. Thus, the premise of absolute totalitarianism is the simultaneous existence

of radical individualism (i.e., social atomism) and the total integration of each human personality into the overarching sovereignty of the leader and his party. (cf. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*; Robert Nisbet, *The Quest for Community*; J.L. Talmon, *Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*.) From Rousseau to Stalin, a man is defined only as citizen or comrade; no other membership has any legitimacy. As Koestler has put it in *Darkness at Noon*, a man is defined as one million men divided by one million — a pure social atom.

Conservatives rest the case for human freedom on the existence of legitimate multiple sovereignties, each with the authority to express itself by means of establishing institutional restraints on members and on each other. Men can be a part of several of them at any point in time, and each will impart a degree of meaning and stability into his life. Destroy the system of plural sovereignties, each with its own legitimate realm of authority, and society faces the creation of a vast bureaucracy. In fact, the existence of the deadening bureaucratic hand will be the single sovereignty that can compete effectively with the capriciousness of the will of the ruler. The citizen is caught in the cross-fire between the impersonal cage of bureaucracy and the contingent world of the totalitarian leader. Total personalism doing battle with total impersonalism, with the individual citizen crushed in the middle. (Nazi Germany has been described as a "confusion of private armies and private intelligence services," in which the traditional army, the Reichswehr, was confronted with, first, the S.A. forces under Roehm, and second, the S.S. forces under Himmler, and few men ever knew where they stood in relation to the various bureaucracies. The faceless bureaucrats and