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Intellectuals *and* The American Tradition

By FRANCIS G. WILSON

University of Illinois

TEACHING is a creative activity, the power of which has been recognized in the social philosophy of every literate civilization. Just as Confucius recognized the power of the teacher, so did the Greeks, the Romans and from the earliest centuries the leaders of Christianity. Today it is little different, for in times of social stress or disintegration the inquiring mind begins to examine what the teachers have been doing with and to their students. While the power of the teacher is not immediate, while the teacher does not make decisions to be carried out by underlings, his power is a part of the long-run conditioning of all immediate decisions. The teacher shapes the minds of those who command and those who obey; his work is a necessary condition for both.

Yet the teaching function in society must not be viewed too narrowly. Parents have, in moral theory, been vested with a responsibility for the teaching of their children; the clergy of whatever creed have insisted that the Christian church is characterized by a duty to instruct the faithful in

social values as well as doctrine; the governors of states admonish the citizen; employers have assumed responsibilities for the minds of those they employ, and now the leaders of labor insist on the right to teach their employers. Besides all of these types of social education which are definitely related to the structure of power, there are those whose work is specifically the instruction of the young. For hundreds of years the structure of educational systems has varied little in the filial relationship of teacher and student, and the crowning point in education, the university, has a tradition as old as most other institutions.

The present crisis in European and American societies has its counterpart in the discussion of the work of the teacher. It is now a truism to say that this is a revolutionary period in the history of the whole West, and global war itself is but the final seal set upon the changes taking place in our system of society. Our concern in this paper is not primarily with those who attack university education because students have not been as willing as

some others to assume the burdens of war. Here is a passing phase of the criticism of education, for American college students are brave men on the field of battle. Among the heroes of this war it is safe to predict that there will be a disproportionate number who have been shaped in our higher educational institutions. Therefore, the criticism of some students for their part in the debate on the war from September 1, 1939, to December 7, 1941, is already simply a matter of recorded history.

To recognize thus that there is really nothing the matter with our students, especially in relation to the war, does not end the discussion. Rather attention is shifting more directly to the teacher, who is what might be called a kind of professional intellectual. Such a shift in attention suggests likewise that the inquiry is not to be superficial; it points to more fundamental issues in the social position of modern education. The college instructor and researcher has won, after years of effort, the battle to have himself listed among the intellectual classes in American society. In other societies in Europe and South America the professor gained this objective long before. Ironically, however, the American teacher attained this end just as the social revolution in the western world has threatened more seriously than for a hundred and fifty years the whole economic foundation of the educational system.

Though the future of education hangs in the balance, owing to the eventual social consequences of war, we must be more specific about the teachers themselves. The philosophy of progress has been associated with science since the eighteenth century

(witness Benjamin Franklin,) and scientists have generally been thought of as benefactors of humanity. Those who taught science in institutions of learning were recognized as worthy assistants of the older disciplines such as the classics, theology and moral philosophy. At least we can say that, aside from nineteenth-century developments in biology and the theory of evolution, scientists have not been at war with the general climate of opinion. Scientists, like moralists, have been predominantly conservative; they have not questioned the moral foundations of the social order. Nor today can we say that scientists are the object of distrust on the part of those who want to send their children to an institution of advanced training. It is only the scientists who make their science a spring board to social theory who are likely to go counter to beliefs which are the cement of democratic society.

It is quite otherwise with the social sciences and those intellectuals who call themselves social scientists. The strength, massiveness and incomprehensibility of the modern university has protected the social scientist from the inquiry and evaluation that otherwise might have been his. Social scientists have, in part, grown and formulated their views in the shadowed protection of the sciences and the older traditions of university instruction. The time may be coming soon, however, when the theory taught by the social scientists will become the center of a constant interest on the part of parents whose patronage permits universities to live. Some signs of this change are already apparent.

One of the remarkable aspects of the American educational system in recent decades has been the implicit confi-

dence of the parents and colleges as to the social values of the education they are giving. The criticism thereof is not organized, and is not potent enough to control what men are doing. The future of our democratic and popular education depends in significant support of the education of the young. One experiences a confidence in the realization that the students are receiving education from themselves but has been a vast that the child opportunities that parents have to provide this mental beliefs and foundation of the national enterprise has been simply a part of the provided real and the willing

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dence of the people that universities and colleges are conservators of the social values of democracy. Whatever criticism there has been has not been organized, and it has not had competent enough leadership to expose and control what many university teachers were doing. One may argue that the future of our universities, as democratic and popular institutions, depends in significant measure on the support of those who have children to educate. One of the most sobering experiences a college instructor may have is the realization that many of the students are receiving money for their education from parents who have themselves but meager incomes. There has been a vast popular determination that the children shall have better opportunities than the parents. And parents have turned to the universities to provide this opportunity. Such parental beliefs have been one of the solid foundations of all of our educational enterprise. Education has not been simply for gentlemen; it has been part of the democratic system which provided real opportunity for the able and the willing.

It is not intended to suggest that social scientists have been undemocratic. Far from it. But that their conception of social purpose, their idea of the correct system of social organization, and the values of social life they have held have often been different, divergent and in conflict with those of the masses who support education, can hardly be denied. It is easy for the social scientist to set himself up as the judge of what is proper, and under present conditions he may war for a life time on the beliefs of the sovereign citizen. One fell into conversation recently with a social sci-

entist who spent an hour denouncing "the magic frame of reference" of popular thought. The speaker was really an evangelist whose mission was to save the people from themselves. A worthy objective perhaps, but one is reminded of Thomas Jefferson's dictum that it is tyranny to make people pay taxes for the propagation of ideas which they believe to be wrong. Here the conflict between the ideas of the social scientist and the people is clear. It is a conflict which does not exist in many other regions of education. The chemist is trusted by the people; the physicist is no social saboteur; the teacher of the doctor, the lawyer, the agricultural economist, and the young business man has behind him the aspirations of the thousands of hard-working parents who compose our democratic citizenry.

To state the matter in another way, part of our educational system is a support for the traditions of the people; another part is contemptuous of that tradition itself. Now one may argue that this situation is not new in society. We may urge that any national tradition is hard to define, that it is contradictory in itself, and indeed that the tradition is made slowly and in the end by those who make war upon it. It may also be urged that at the present time the revolution of which we spoke is, specifically, the disintegration of the consensus gentium within the nation and between the nations. The class war at home and the international war across the seas is the living import of the revolution of the twentieth century. Such a statement is of little consolation to the social scientist, however, unless he is willing to accept the revolutionary principle itself. But if this is done he has under-

cut his own position as educator and fulfiller of the historically matured aspirations of the people. It would seem that very few people like revolutions; even the desperate hardly love the consequences of their desperation.

We must, therefore, undertake a somewhat closer examination of the social scientist and his claims to intellectual leadership. In summary we may say that some social scientists are philosophically illiterate, which is to say that they do not see very clearly the logical implications and the social consequences of their positions. Many social scientists try energetically to destroy values; they are morally cynical and anarchically relativist in their system of social values, without being able to provide an alternative system of faith or social integration. Again, many social scientists are at heart interested in becoming part of the ruling order; they desire to exercise immediate social power while remaining in function educators and teachers. Tersely, we may say the social scientists have moved away from values toward an ambiguous conception of science. Often there has been a tendency to deny values, while the people with their religious and political leaders, retain a belief that by reason and the historic tradition of morality some values may be shown to be true, or at least fundamentally preferable to certain others. Some social scientists have eliminated from their working vocabulary the words good, bad, right, justice and injustice. The least one might say here is that in practice these ideas come in by the back door immediately they are thrust out at the front.

The struggle over values in social theory becomes central, therefore, to the social scientist. In the near past

there has been emerging a more conscious defense of values, or one might say the defense of a hierarchy of social values, in which the good and the just are the keystones in the arch of social study. In times such as it is our misfortune to know intimately, men are sacrificing for the good and the just. We face the loss of material goods in the hope that the moral treasury of time will not be exhausted. In days such as these perhaps even philosophers will have less patience with a moral relativism which allows no scientific or logical standing to human justice.

A few years ago no university faculty was openly divided on philosophical issues; one man's opinion was as good as another's. On the other hand, the division of sentiment on philosophical and social science issues at the University of Chicago is almost as real as it was in the schools of Athens or in the medieval university. The battle between those who support President Robert Maynard Hutchins as the proponent of an educational viewpoint and those who assert the principles of what now may be called "traditional" social science is no mere matter of after-dinner conversation. Those who believe in the supremacy and the proof of historic moral values necessarily condemn the relativist objectivity of the social scientists in a number of university fields. What the University of Chicago's war of philosophy signifies as much as anything is that for the first time in a generation a great university has on its faculty persons who are openly and stubbornly defending the historic moral tradition of the western nations. There is more to be heard in the future about the Battle of the Midway.

Since democracy has been built upon morality, especially that morality is the basis of the true community, the defense of democratic institutions is a large measure a defense of morality. In the mind of the modern man, we increasingly assume the sacrifice, democracy together, for without democratic government we have no justice. Yet justice is one of the forms of the world today. It is the foundation of the teachers are not to be in the turmoil of global war is the possession and control of social responsibilities of the soldier or the business man, the justice of our time is the principle of the historic tradition of the basis of the American self. Indeed, one might say that it is the moral tradition of the Declaration of Independence, a doctrine of justice, the Constitution, or the Supreme Court. We assume that justice is the moral tradition of man has moral tradition is thus the moral tradition of control: technique and the social scientist as a rule accepts the tradition, it would seem the necessity of stating the imperativeness of

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Since democracy in western states has been built upon the tradition of morality, especially the ancient view that morality is the basis of justice and that the true commonwealth is the embodiment institutionally of justice, the defense of democracy today is in a large measure a defense of that tradition. In the minds of those who willingly assume the risk of the extreme sacrifice, democracy and morality go together, for without justice democratic government would have no meaning. Yet justice itself is older than any of the forms of government in the world today. It is to the soldier part of the foundation of the stars. But teachers are not to be forgotten in the turmoil of global strategy. The teacher is the possessor of part of the power and control of society. He has the responsibilities of power just as the soldier or the bureaucrat. To teach the justice of our cause means teaching the principles of justice, the historic tradition of morality which is at the basis of the American tradition itself. Indeed, one may argue easily that it is the most important element in the tradition of Americans. After all, the Declaration of Independence is a doctrine of justice, just as is the Constitution, or the decisions of the Supreme Court. These documents assume that justice is possible, and that man has moral responsibilities. Doctrine is thus more than a mere technique of control; politics is more than technique and manipulation. If the social scientist as teacher and intellectual accepts the defense of our tradition, it would seem that he faces the necessity of stating the reason and the imperativeness of purpose.

It may seem paradoxical to argue that in a democracy the people are the

chief dangers of the incoherent principle that what the people want is the test of right. The value relativism of social scientists would lead, logically, in this direction, for politics becomes little more than a system of techniques to bring to power any known political preference. But to the extent that the people believe in the American tradition of social values they must perforce deny that a majority has the right to do anything it wants. A belief in values is a validation of the often stated constitution argument of the conservatives that by the Constitution the people have placed limitations upon themselves in the choice of political techniques. Nor can we say that social science positivism is consistent, for, in addition to a denial of values proved by reason, it asserts values which supposedly comport with an ambiguously functioning scientific method. The defender of values sees no need of denying scientific method, since ultimately there can be no real conflict between values, or a vital moral tradition, and the progress of science.

What should be called the American tradition? The historical jurists have long since emphasized the quality of growth in any tradition. There must be a practical continuity in national history, and by a practical continuity we mean the year-to-year behavior of the people, the conscious or unconscious acceptance of behavior patterns and the values attached to them. But the historical mind also insists that the basis of present-day action must be this living social continuity in time. Today when Americans are called upon to engage in a war effort greater than any in the past, it is the past which is used to validate

the common cause in the present. We are defending the American way; we are fighting and dying for our traditional mode of living and thinking. If our tradition did not support such a war effort, the willingness of citizens to fight the war could hardly be generated by a few propaganda blasts from the banks of the Potomac. Or, we might point to the rise of nationalism in the nineteenth century as a growing and conscious adherence to the past. Our nation, like others in Europe, became united in the last century by the willingness to wage war for national unity. There is not intention here to deny the evils of an exaggerated defense of national tradition; nor is there any intention to deny the social value of a nationalism animated by a sense of justice.

But no national tradition is without conflict. There are internal stresses in every national tradition in the West, including our own. What is important to remember, however, is that these intra-traditional conflicts occur within the framework of a larger unity. The rise of strong national states and the continuance of weaker ones indicates something of the strength and variation in tradition. National traditions tend to have strength within certain geographic areas and among certain kinds of people. The increase in the number of written languages in Europe (now over fifty) would indicate the emphasis on language as a symbol of integration for a tradition group. But almost any social institution, such as law or religion, may and does serve the same purpose. What we wish to emphasize here, however, is the compatibility in historical practice between the larger national tradition

and the existence of lesser traditions. A national tradition is a kind of confederation of weaker traditions; there is of necessity decentralization in the manner of life and the principles of justice accepted by the people of any nation.

It takes little thought to realize the diversity of tradition in the United States. Every American who travels senses the differences in speech, habits of living and other matters, but he can see differences in the practice of justice. Our tradition is regional, marked differences arising from the variant historical experience of the people. But it is also functional, for there are traditional common interests, say religious and economic, which spread over geographic regions and separate the interests of people within regions. Members of a religious body have common interests with all who share the same views as to religious truth; economic groups have like interests, for business men have much in common wherever they may be. One might suggest that those more fortunate in the economic scale may, because of their social mobility, feel a greater mutual interest with others of their like than those who are less fortunate. On the other hand, the common interest of people may be a fictional or literary creation and not backed by any form of organization. We may observe the literary union of the middle class, but it is hard to fit into the observable social facts or behavior of middle class members.

When we speak of a defense of the American tradition, or a recognition with good will of that tradition, we must imply, of course, the defense of variation within our tradition. European social scientists have, in gen-

eral, been much more American studies or rationalized. Indeed, French and the English the differences and morals. In the War Between pride in tradition to a much less States. South since 1861, on larily as to sta vior. There is tinuous guerrilla ways of the N some who sho Midwest is t is undesirable. tional side the stepped up in hardly abated b tional unity in no one may ass in society, for rise and fall, w lose their pro power. Within and respect of national streng with recognized

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eral, been much more willing than American students of society to accept or rationalize social variation. Indeed, Frenchmen, Swiss, Germans, and the English tend to be proud of the differences in national folkways and morals. It may be the heritage of the War Between the States, but such pride in traditional difference exists to a much less extent in the United States. Southern tradition has been, since 1861, on the defensive, particularly as to standards of social behavior. There is among many a continuous guerrilla warfare against the ways of the New Englander, and to some who should know better the Middlewest is the epitome of all that is undesirable. Likewise, on the functional side the class struggle has been stepped up in recent years and is hardly abated by the necessity of national unity in the war. Naturally, no one may assume a static condition in society, for social groups tend to rise and fall, while regions gain and lose their prosperity and political power. Within limits, the acceptance and respect of tradition go together; national strength implies harmony with recognized differences.

Yet the heart of the problem of social scientists and our tradition is to be found in the argument about standards of behavior, the principles of morality and issues of distributive justice. Social scientists who plant their feet firmly on an empirical study of society may find themselves arguing that the morality of bankers or manufacturers is imperfect; many who profess relativism in values urge a more or less absolute set of values against those they dislike. And those who have no respect for Christian moral- ity find themselves urging the Chris-

tian position against the treatment of some minority groups. While the social scientists adopt their own "magical frame of reference," they condemn the basis for those standards as they are held almost universally by the masses of the American people in whatever group or region they may happen to be found.

On philosophical grounds it may be urged that most social scientists have been unwilling to state clearly the basis upon which they press values against those they choose for opponents. In fact, in most cases the reasonable defense of values is ignored. Such a situation arises no doubt from worship of the success of the natural scientists, whose achievements in predictable results mount impressively each year. Many social scientists have rejected moral philosophy, but they cannot duplicate in the social field the work of natural scientists in theirs. The conventional defense of the failure of the social sciences to be scientific is that we must wait until further data are in, and then social prudence will work like—or almost like—the carefully established laboratory experiment. But in the meantime to argue standards of morality or justice in the philosophical tradition of the West, whether Christian or otherwise, is merely to sort out and classify one's prejudices.

Alternatively, values may be derived from the naturalistic ground of experience. At first glance it might seem that such a derivation of values would support completely the orderly evolution of tradition. It might support a tolerant consensus and respect as to variations in our tradition, and it might provide thereby a sound basis for national action in the revolution-

any era of the twentieth century. But the kind of experience that is desirable and the kinds of values which are supposed to arise from experience are not identical with tradition; rather the argument from experience becomes with many a revolutionary criticism of tradition itself. Thus the question arises whether there is any connection between actual experience and the values that pragmatists and instrumentalists accept. The experience such social scientists approve is in many cases to be created and directed by the instruments of power; fundamental reformism, therefore, becomes characteristic of this point of view, and antagonism to the American tradition remains. In so far as experience theory has been a support for common sense attitudes toward social behavior, there has not been serious objection; but in so far as this view has been a repudiation of the basis of national agreement, it has been of little effect. In many respects pragmatism has been a confirmation of customary American thought, and in this sense it has become a generally acceptable viewpoint. But in its search for values pragmatism has implied a relativism which to many has seemed inconsistent with either the basis of values or the values themselves which have been part of the American tradition. The logical positivists who have come more recently on the scene have, of course, attempted to avoid statements which are not clearly supported by science; these thinkers have attempted to remain remote from the statement of any values, though implicitly they have argued that some values have no reasonable foundation.

If we move beyond the slopes of Parnassus onto the field of the struggle

for power, we encounter immediately the naturalism and scientism of the left-wing and the rejection of the values commonly associated with our tradition. We have already insisted that in the back of the social science mind is a desire to share political power in order to reshape society by the fiat of law or by the erosion of bureaucratic authority. The social scientist looks to the civil service as his opportunity for power, but the Marxian (of whatever shade of orthodoxy) looks not only to the bureaucracy but also to the struggle of the political parties for legislative and executive position. The Marxian is and must be a revolutionary, for his effort is to destroy the traditional formation of society, to make mince meat of the economic system (which even conservatives do not say will last forever,) and to bring about the overthrow of those who share now in the control of the state. In theory, of course, the argument pleads for the sovereignty of the masses and urges that socialism is the logical fulfillment of our tradition. From the practice of socialism in Europe, the conservative may well argue that what takes place is a concentration of authority in a reorganized bureaucratic state.

To the conservative mind it is strange that social scientists in perceptible numbers should have espoused the Marxian philosophy. But such an espousal does in fact make such intellectuals bitter opponents of the American tradition. For purposes of politics European socialism may be looked upon as the completion of the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson, but the seriousness of such an argument should be doubted. At best we may say of the Marxian intellectuals that they have assisted in the development

of the class struggle in the United States, a development which the political forbears feared to avoid by the principle embodied in the tradition. Additionally, the Marxian suspicion to bear upon the process, and many of the authors of the loss of the American university.

That Marxism is the maturing but the can tradition few can first place, materiality and theoretical appendages of American tradition does so now in the and justice are true of man, cleared of orderly inclination cept. In the second believes ultimately will be necessary new society. On the principle continuity in character revolutionary tradition revolution which fight for God-given of '76 did, is to find moral continuity tions. Yet the Marxism is to defend and justice which rectly from the Marxism upon which based. The problem logically, a struggle the attainment of validity outside of society.

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of the class struggle in the United States, a development which our political forbears foresaw and tried to avoid by the principle class reconciliation embodied in the Constitution. Additionally, they have brought suspicion to bear upon the educational process, and may be in the end the authors of the loss of academic liberty in American universities

That Marxism is in conflict with the maturing but complicated American tradition few would deny. In the first place, materialism makes of morality and theories of justice ideological appendages of class groups. The American tradition has believed and does so now in this war, that morality and justice are truths which the mind of man, cleared of weakness and disorderly inclinations, can see and accept. In the second place, Marxism believes ultimately that a revolution will be necessary to bring about the new society. Our tradition is based on the principle of maturation and continuity in change. It is not a revolutionary tradition in spite of the revolution which gave us birth. To fight for God-given rights, as the men of '76 did, is to fight for an unbroken moral continuity in social institutions. Yet the inconsistency of Marxism is to defend standards of morality and justice which in no wise arise directly from the dialectical materialism upon which modern socialism is based. The proletarian revolution is, logically, a struggle for power and not the attainment of moral values having validity outside of the class structure of society.

The classroom preaching of the class struggle, as the preaching of it anywhere else, is but a phase of the technique of the class struggle itself. The

conservative seeks constantly to reconcile and soften the clash of conflicting groups; the revolutionist lives only through the sharpening of the warfare between groups in society. Classes suddenly achieve a symbolic coherence in the literature of revolution, and just as suddenly that class may fade from the picture as the technique of struggle shifts. At one time the banker is the chief enemy, then the manufacturer takes his place, and following him the landlord. Each group, however mobile and changing it may be, is held for a time in focus for all to see. Intellectually the class struggle, the heart of modern revolutionism, is a technique of manipulating group symbols. Ridicule, charges of lack of morality, and charges of incompetence blend in an argument for the inevitability of the overthrow of the ruling class. On the other hand, classes themselves are in part verbal symbols; we might call the idea of class as used in the class struggle just a bad semantic reaction. The subtlety of the argument arises from the fact that the traditional moral values are mixed carefully with a moral relativism which recognizes ultimately only the struggle for power.

One need not fear for the triumph of socialistic thought in the United States. We know enough of the triumphs of socialism elsewhere to realize that the final product does not resemble the promises of those who lead revolutions. Or, we may argue that in the end socialism must mean the triumph and the sovereignty of the administrator or the manager, but certainly not a democratic control by the masses of the people. Here, however, such considerations are not our primary concern. The attack on tradi-

tion is a serious thing; it must be fought against because of the distortion of tradition which may be brought about by such attacks from the intellectuals. It must result in increased social dislocation without doing much to ameliorate the constant difficulties to be found in any society.

If one observes the response to the attack on the American way there is much to cause gratification. Pleas for fascism before the American people have failed ignominiously, and the failure of German propaganda in America is sound augury for the future. But before the failure of Nazism there had also been the failure of Marxism to attain any significant power outside of a small area. More blatant struggles for political power have been pushed, moreover, to the background. But the discussion of our tradition and its defense has not been negative alone, for there have been positive assertions of various groups of their right to live. The resurgence of the farmers has been accompanied by a new agrarian philosophy, of which more is to be heard in the future. Conservative labor leaders have been standing their ground in favor of the co-operation of labor and capital in American industry, and American business has been active in its own defense. The divergent values of the American tradition are asserting themselves under the principle of liberty, law, and national unity in the great emergency.

We are discussing here the creative power of the teacher, especially of the social sciences, in relation to the conflict between conservatism and revolutionism. While the social consequences of global war may amount to a revolution in themselves, the revo-

lution of the twentieth century is more than this. For the revolution of which we speak has been a fundamental attack throughout the West on the traditions of civilized life; it has been an attack on those values, older than the modern state, which have legitimized and restrained the power of society over its members. Nor can we say that democracy has had a monopoly on such values, for the values of order and consensus are older than democratic government which has added to itself the traditions of the community governed by law, of the society which respects the rights of individuals because they emerge from a moral order which has been rationalized by the union of the philosophy of the ancients and the principles of Christianity. That tradition has endured as the central fact in Western thought, and even those who have opposed a part of it have not been able or willing to escape the whole of it. The defense of that tradition is the heart of modern conservatism, that is, a belief in the continuity of values, their reasonableness and their validity. But it has been more than this, for the recognition of the moral rights of the individual has implied that all governments are restrained by laws which are an expression of the Greek-Christian system of values. Thus in conservatism the rule of law has meant the denial of arbitrary government; it has always been the enemy of tyranny.

What is peculiar about the revolutionary intellectualism of our century is that government has been emancipated from the restraints which arose from moral and human values. Government has been freed from the necessity of respecting the human personality. And it has, ironically, been

freed from this order to attain the by modern materialism. As Huizinga, an, observed, today in history we have function of the in the direction. But we may say ways been implied though in our day so. The only as such can make to defend the civilization. In so by a defense values which has past by both the ing elite and those an electoral share state.

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freed from this community of law in order to attain the values postulated by modern materialism and naturalism. As Huizinga, the Dutch historian, observed, today for the first time in history we have a denial of the function of the mind and of reason in the direction of the social order. But we may say that tyranny has always been implicitly anti-intellectual, though in our day it has been frankly so. The only answer that the teacher as such can make to this challenge is to defend the tradition of Western civilization. In America he must do so by a defense of the tradition of values which has been accepted in the past by both the educated and governing elite and those who have had only an electoral share in the control of the state.

As the social scientist has moved away from the defense of American values and their evolutionary institutional expression, he has found himself at war with the American tradition, with the common man and his leaders. This has placed the intellectuals on the side of the revolution and against the conservatism which legitimizes a responsible, constitutional government. A worship of the scientific method, uncritically accepted, has been in large measure responsible for this, for it has meant the attempted destruction of the Greek-Christian tradition of social morality, accepted in varying degrees of clarity by most of the population. Yet many social scientists have gone beyond the mere denial of the values of the common man and his leaders, for many have accepted in one form or another the principle of dictatorship or tyranny in order to attain putatively just ends. The glorification of the Soviet regime has

been a form of this, and we have observed, as André Gide said, that of Russia lies have been said with love and the truth has been said with hate. Today when Russia is our ally most Americans feel quite uncommitted to accept the Russian system any more than that of any other of our allies, though we may be proud of the valor of all who fight with us.

Beyond the uncritical acceptance of social scientism and the worship of ideologies out of Egypt and Babylon, other intellectuals who study society have in their attack on the freedom of the individual, turned fervently to the state as the remedy for the evils they see. Indeed, if one rejects the richness of our traditions of social charity and morality, there is no place else to turn. Only the future can evaluate the effectiveness of the state, of our state, in the present world crisis. But to assume that the bureaucrat is the answer to our problems, to be willing to surrender to the state all that it may ask hardly indicates much more than being in step with the turmoil of the present era. If we by stealth find ourselves with a new constitution, a state in which the bureaucrat is remote from the people and in which the principles of federal decentralization are things of the past, the responsibility will in no small measure be that of the intellectuals who for many years have shown little love for anything which antedates their own apostasy from the American tradition.

Yet the defense of our democratic heritage is not merely a concern of national tradition. One import of the revolutionary era is that the defense of civilized politics is a global effort. In spite of wide divergence between the systems of democratic government,

ral sciences work for progress and thereby strengthen our faith in ourselves; the social sciences at war with the traditional values of a society work for the revolutionary period which social scientists will in no sense control.

A social scientist, whether conservative or revolutionary, knows that no society remains unchanged. There is no static society and there is no tradition without its development through history. Intellectuals may help to shape that tradition, aid in its development, and assist in the more perfect realization of values in institutions. It may be added that conservatism is a theory of change just as is revolution-

ism. But the concept of change in these views is in fundamental conflict. Our society needs teachers who are defenders of our tradition, teachers whose effort is to establish an orderly continuity in national history, but who nevertheless see social experiment in its proper context. Our society needs teachers who are aware of the hierarchy of values in our Greek-Christian conception of justice, and who know well what the failure of conservatism has meant in the last generation in Europe and what it will mean to democratic education should the defense of our way of life, our tradition, fail in this age of iron.

THE PRAISEWORTHY CITIZEN

"The praise of the virtuous citizen is not complete when he is described as the person who serves the laws best and obeys them most, but the higher form of praise is that which describes him as the good citizen who passes through life undefiled and is obedient to the words of the legislator, both when he is giving the laws and when he assigns praise and blame. This is the truest word that can be spoken in praise of a citizen; and the true legislator ought not only to write his laws, but also to interweave them with all such things as seem to him honorable and dishonorable. And the perfect citizen ought to seek to strengthen these no less than the principles of law which are sanctioned by punishments."

LAWS 822-3