

# PERIODICALS

*Reviews of articles from periodicals and specialized journals here and abroad*

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## POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

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### *Reagan's Luck* 1981-1985

"The Luck of the President" by Michael Mandelbaum, and "Lost Opportunities" by Charles William Maynes, in *Foreign Affairs* (Special Issue 1985), 58 East 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Five years into Ronald Reagan's presidency, some observers have begun to suspect that the popular Chief Executive is just plain lucky.

Among them is Mandelbaum, research director of the Lehrman Institute in Manhattan. Owing as much to good fortune as to good politics, the Reagan administration has pursued what he calls "the most successful American foreign policy in 25 years."

At the outset, Reagan was fortunate to face an unlucky Soviet regime, burdened by ailing leaders (until Gorbachev) and a flagging economy. The stalemated Iran-Iraq border war "nicely, if perversely" served U.S. interests by preventing either country from dominating its oil-producing neighbors. China's slow shift toward free enterprise seemed to support Reagan's vision of a world "moving away from communism into the warm sunlight of human freedom."

But luck does not explain everything. Mandelbaum admires Reagan's leadership skills. The President shows good timing (e.g., an "unerring sense of just how far to go" during the 1985 Beirut hostage crisis). He also possesses an "elementary sense of the world," knowing how "to make broad themes compelling to a mass audience."

Maynes, editor of *Foreign Policy*, is more skeptical. He predicts that Reagan's reliance on "negative diplomacy"—a strategy, often associated with Charles de Gaulle, of initially saying "no"—will produce future difficulties with the Soviets. Many analysts, he adds, have failed to recognize the fundamental shift from the foreign policies of the Nixon-Ford-Carter era, perhaps because Reagan's Cold War rhetoric has softened lately. Maynes sees serious hazards in several Reagan innovations: the unilateral Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars); a laissez-faire approach to exchange rates and international interest-rate differentials; an over-reliance on "instruments of force" and on the Central Intelligence Agency in the Third World; and the U.S. pullout from the United Nations Educational,

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*Neither controversy nor turnover in Ronald Reagan's administration has eroded his popularity, gaining him renown as "The Teflon President."*

Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

Despite the alarms of 1985 (the Bitburg fiasco, the Beirut hijacking, the *Achille Lauro* incident), Maynes concedes that "the diplomatic costs to the United States of its undiplomatic behavior seemed small." Yet Maynes predicts that later in Reagan's second term a sense of "lost opportunities"—for arms control, improved relations with NATO and Third World countries, and a curb on global debt—will loom large in Washington and among U.S. allies abroad.

Maynes likens the Reagan administration, at this point, to an athlete who has been training for five years but has never entered a race. Political power accumulated but never used for more constructive purposes, he asserts, "is power wasted."

## *The Virtues Of Dissents*

"In Defense of Dissents" by William J. Brennan, Jr., in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Feb. 1986), Univ. of Pa., 3533 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

Justice Brennan, known for forging majorities during the Supreme Court's liberal era under Chief Justice Earl Warren (1953–69), has become a minority voice under Warren Burger.

During the last five years, the 80-year-old Brennan has often publicized

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his opposition to the High Court majority's view of the death penalty, obscenity, and other constitutional issues. Now entering his 30th year in the Court, Brennan defends his judicial role as a chronic dissenter.

For a brief period, Brennan notes, Supreme Court justices did not put forth dissenting views. Chief Justice John Marshall (1801-35), departing from the English tradition of *seriatim* opinions (whereby judges on a panel deliver individual rulings), adopted the practice of issuing the Court's judgment in a single, presumably unanimous, opinion. Not surprisingly, Marshall's innovation did not please his fellow justices. By 1805, the Court allowed formal dissents back into the official proceedings.

To Brennan, the salient virtue of a dissenting opinion is its capacity to "ripen" into a majority opinion—no matter how long such maturation may take. In the case of Justice John Harlan's objection to racial segregation (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896), 58 years passed before the Warren Court vindicated it in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), enabling a 12-year-old black girl to attend a white public school.

Of course, "most dissents never ripen and do not deserve to," Brennan adds. But they may counter "rigid or stale" thoughts, forcing justices to "reconsider the fundamental questions and to rethink the result" whenever a case comes up for review. A single justice's persistent opposition to a majority opinion on a single issue (such as Brennan's objection to the death penalty) should not be regarded as rigid or stale, provided that it reflects "a conviction honestly and sincerely maintained."

### Why Sanctuary?

"Sanctuary Scoundrels" by Rael Jean Isaac, in *The American Spectator* (Apr. 1986), 1101 N. Highland St., Arlington, Va. 22210.

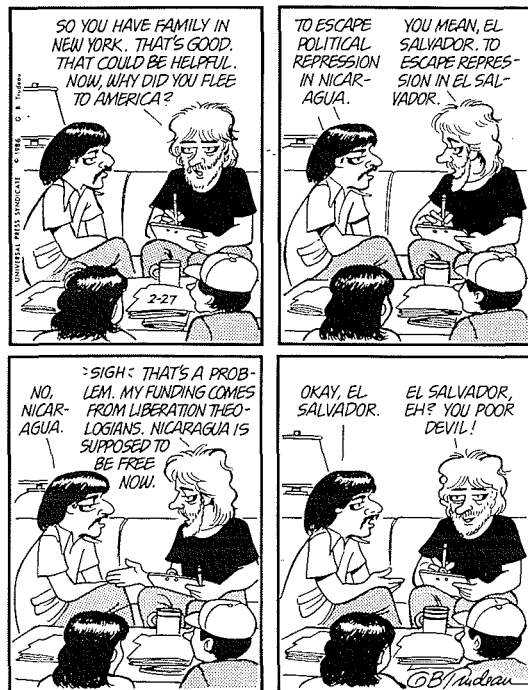
Last year, an estimated 200,000 Central Americans—mainly from Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala—illegally entered the United States. Many of those immigrants sought minimum-wage jobs; others sought refuge from wars or oppressive regimes at home.

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) finds and deports 2,000-3,000 illegal aliens each month, but it cannot keep up with the influx. According to a 1980 census estimate, roughly 1.3 million Central Americans reside illegally in the United States.

Keen on allowing the Latin newcomers to stay in the United States are members of some 250 churches and 12 synagogues, all part of a "sanctuary movement." They help smuggle aliens across the Mexican border and shelter them from INS officials. In fact, more than a dozen U.S. cities (including Chicago, Seattle, and Los Angeles) and the state of New Mexico have declared themselves sanctuaries—largely a symbolic gesture, since illegal aliens in these places still must face federal immigration laws.

Isaac, author of *The Coercive Utopians* (1985), sees some stark inconsistencies. She argues that the "sanctuarists" are really more interested in creating propaganda against U.S. "imperialism" in Central America than in securing asylum for individual immigrants. For example, the sanctuarists readily take in refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala but often leave defectors from Marxist Nicaragua out in the cold.

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Through his comic strip, Doonesbury, G. B. Trudeau pokes fun at the sanctuary movement: The liberal activist, Reverend Sloan, interrogates Jesus Garza, a Central American refugee.

Why? According to John O'Leary, a member of the leftish National Lawyers Guild, many sanctuary supporters feel it is "not politically correct to criticize [Nicaragua's] Sandinista government."

The sanctuarists claim that if the INS deports Salvadoran and Guatemalan political refugees, it endangers them (they may be tortured or murdered by their respective home regimes). Yet, to Isaac, the evidence suggests otherwise. The American Civil Liberties Union compared the names of 8,500 deportees to El Salvador and Guatemala with those of 22,000 subsequent victims of human rights violations in those countries and found only 113 "possible" matches.

Moreover, when the U.S. State Department launched its own investigation, it too found deported Salvadorans in little danger back home. Checking up on a random selection of 482 deportees, it discovered that 145 had assumed false identities, 39 had returned (illegally) to the United States, and 197 had reported no harassment at all. One was killed, accidentally, by Communist guerrillas.

Isaac does not deny the sanctuarists' humanitarian sentiments, but she notes their consistent anti-administration rhetoric (e.g., slogans against U.S. "oppression"). Refugees chosen for the sanctuarists' "freedom train" must often agree, in advance, to speak out publicly against U.S. policy in Central America.

By exploiting the illegal immigrants' plight for their own political purposes, Isaac contends, the sanctuarists in the United States actually undermine the American tradition of political asylum.

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*Gender Politics*

"Why Are There So Few Women in the House?" by Robert A. Bernstein, in *Western Political Quarterly* (Mar. 1986), 258 Orson Spencer Hall, Univ. of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112.

Women are no likelier to win seats in the U.S. House of Representatives today than they were 20 years ago—although three times as many women now gain nominations in Democratic and Republican party primaries.

Why aren't these women getting elected?

For one thing, says Bernstein, a political scientist at Texas A&M, they are winning the wrong kind of nominations: Most female candidates are challenging House incumbents (male or female), an inherently uphill battle. (Although 38 women ran against incumbents in 1984, only one female candidate won.) Seldom do they get a shot at "open seats" in the House left vacant by deaths or retirement.

Races for such open House seats are scarce—and desirable, since they give local politicians the best chance to advance themselves. The past two decades have seen fierce competition among men for such opportunities. Women (despite their greater number in the U.S. population) are no match. Of the 19 who competed against men for party nominations in open-seat primaries from 1964 to 1970, 12 won. Yet, when 91 women ran for such open-seat nominations during 1974–80, only 21 won. The women's winning *percentage* actually dropped.

Who is the typical female House candidate? At 48, she is almost 10 years older than her average male counterpart, reports Bernstein. Her renown derives from longtime service to her party or civic groups, not from professional prominence. And her drive to succeed (for whatever reasons) is not quite as strong as that of her male competitor.

Fierce ambition can give a candidate an edge, Bernstein observes. Furthermore, the more ambitious male candidates tend not to let "principles" keep them from "performing tasks that increase the probability of getting elected."

Until women show that kind of drive, their number in the House (23 at present) is not likely to grow. A sad commentary, says the author, on the U.S. electoral system.

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*More SALT*

"Can the U.S. Trust the USSR?" by Miroslav Nincic, in *Scientific American* (Apr. 1986), 415 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

In July 1983, a U.S. "Big Bird" satellite spotted a powerful new Soviet radar station under construction in central Siberia, roughly 465 miles from the Mongolian border and 1,000 miles from the Arctic Ocean.

Last year, the Reagan administration denounced the project as a violation of the 1972 Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. In response, the Sovi-

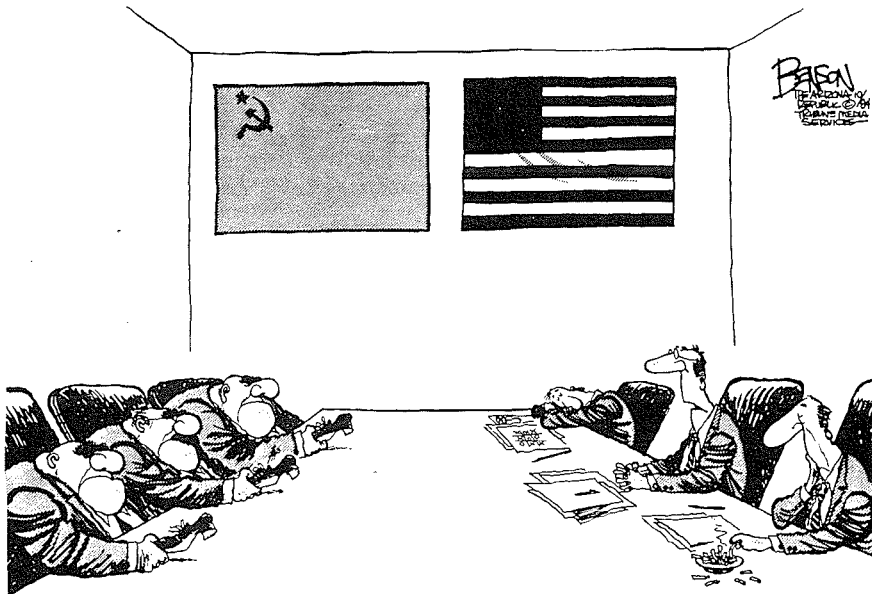
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ets maintained that the radar station would only track objects in outer space; it was not part of an ABM defense system. Washington still has its doubts about Moscow's intentions.

Such charges of treaty noncompliance are not new. Ever since the first Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT I) treaty went into effect in 1972, U.S. and Soviet officials have been accusing each other of violations. In 1973-74, Washington observed that the Soviets were testing a special radar system (initially for use with their SA-5 antiaircraft missile) to track strategic ballistic missiles in midflight. The Carter administration subsequently cited it as an ABM violation. More recently, the Reagan administration has questioned the Soviet testing of its new SA-12 hypersonic missiles, which have ABM capabilities.

The 1979 SALT II treaty does permit each country to upgrade old intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and to test and deploy one new ICBM system apiece. The Soviets chose to develop the SS-24; Washington, the MX (Peacekeeper). Yet, when the USSR also began to deploy another missile, the SS-25, American officials charged the Kremlin with contravening the treaty. Moscow's response: The SS-25 is a permissible modernization of its earlier SS-13 ICBM. Meanwhile, the Soviets view the U.S. Midgetman ICBM as a SALT violation.

The basic problem, argues Nincic, a political scientist at New York University, is that Americans, in particular, expect too much from arms control agreements. Treaty provisions are often ambiguous; high-tech monitoring of possible violations is an inexact science. In effect, the SALT



*"Well, then, how about a compromise—say, mutually verifiable cheating?..." Among U.S. cartoonists, skepticism often outweighs faith when it comes to arms control treaties.*

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treaties allow both superpowers to "skirt the edges of the permissible" in strategic weapons development.

Rather than view each alleged infraction as an international incident, the author urges both Washington and Moscow to recognize the SALT agreements, and other arms accords, for what they are: "self-serving tools of national interests," not "airtight formulations." Diplomats from both sides should continue to try, through the Soviet-American Standing Consultative Commission and various "back channels," to clarify the terms of such treaties and to define violations more precisely.

Arms control treaties, however imperfect, do serve a useful purpose, Nincic maintains. They inhibit the arms race. Without such accords, he suggests, the financial costs, and inherent risks, of the nuclear arms race could be even higher.

### *Saving Chile*

"Chile: The Dilemma for U.S. Policy" by Mark Falcoff, in *Foreign Affairs* (Spring 1986), 58 East 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Once a key source of raw materials, notably copper, Chile is now important to the United States mostly for ideological reasons. So says Falcoff, a Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

American liberals, he notes, tend to view Gen. Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship as yet another evil result of meddling by the Central Intelligence Agency in the Third World. Conservatives, after a brief infatuation with the general, who ousted Marxist Salvador Allende in 1973, are beginning to see him as another Anastasio Somoza, the late, ill-fated dictator of Nicaragua.

Washington has never pursued a consistent policy toward Chile, once one of Latin America's strongest democracies. In 1962, worried by Cuba's vows to "export revolution," the Kennedy administration supplied loans and aid to the Christian Democrats' presidential candidate, Eduardo Frei. Once Frei was in office, the United States neglected Chile. In 1970, Frei was narrowly beaten by Allende, the Communist-Socialist leader, in a three-man contest. Alarmed in turn, the Nixon administration applied economic pressure, secretly spending some \$8 million to support moderate opposition groups. But when General Pinochet overthrew Allende, it proved no great victory for freedom.

U.S. hopes for Pinochet were soon dashed by his repressive regime. Neither Jimmy Carter's "human rights" sanctions nor the Reagan administration's "quiet diplomacy" measures have made any impression on Pinochet, says Falcoff—except to suggest that it is possible to defy the United States and still survive, even prosper.

At the moment, Pinochet's overriding goal is to consolidate his military regime forever, via a plebiscite scheduled for 1989. Meanwhile, he has sought to gain the Reagan administration's benign neglect with the "veiled promise" of a civilian president in 1989. But U.S. policy-makers are no longer complaisant; Falcoff predicts that Washington may reinstitute punitive economic measures (a copper embargo, for instance) to pressure Pinochet into allowing a transition to democracy.

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Falcoff suggests different tactics. Instead of sanctions, the Reagan administration should revive covert and overt U.S. political activity inside Chile to support the existing democratic opposition and other reform-minded groups. Two possible approaches: to work toward making Pinochet's autocratic 1980 constitution susceptible to amendment; and to legalize opposing political parties, thereby limiting Pinochet's control.

Above all, says Falcoff, Washington must act before Chile reaches "the point of no return."

### *NATO in Dutch*

"Dateline Holland: NATO's Pyrrhic Victory" by Maarten Huygen, in *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1986), 11 Dupont Circle N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

When Holland finally agreed last November to allow 48 U.S. cruise missiles on its territory, other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) hailed the decision as a sign of the 37-year-old alliance's unity and strength.

Yet Huygen, a reporter for the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*, argues that the decision to deploy the missiles on Dutch soil has done NATO (and Holland) more harm than good.

During the 1950s, Holland was one of NATO's staunchest members. It was the first NATO country to accept tactical nuclear weapons (e.g., the "Honest John" rocket), and it devoted a higher proportion of its gross national product to defense than did most of the alliance's other European members. But Dutch zeal waned during the late 1960s, undermined by a steadily growing welfare state and anti-Americanism sparked by U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In 1977, when President Jimmy Carter spoke of adding neutron warheads to NATO's arsenal, one million of Holland's 14.4 million citizens signed a petition against the proposal.

Confronted by an increasingly vocal peace movement, then-Prime Minister Andreas van Agt waffled when asked to help implement NATO's 1979 "double-track" decision to deploy intermediate-range missiles and pursue arms talks with Moscow. Finally, on November 4, 1985, Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers signed an agreement accepting the U.S. missiles.

Huygen sees little good coming from Lubbers's decision. NATO should have realized that Holland, with its broadly based anti-nuclear movement, was a "poor candidate for the deployment of new nuclear weapons." Most Dutch regard the missiles as "sitting ducks" that invite a pre-emptive Soviet strike.

Furthermore, thanks to the cruise missile controversy, the Hague has neglected its conventional defense efforts. It has not produced a pledged three percent annual rate of growth in its defense budget. Nor has it sent a promised second combat brigade to join allied forces in the Federal Republic of Germany. In the present political climate, domestic Dutch support for such exertions seems unlikely.

Huygen sees no easy way to restore Holland's old pro-NATO consensus. Yet he believes that NATO's leaders could avoid much difficulty all around simply by allowing the alliance's smaller members to participate in



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major policy decisions. (Holland, for example, was not even invited to the January 1979 NATO meeting at which its territory was chosen as a likely missile deployment site.) "The more Holland is involved in international decision-making," says Huygen, "the more it [will] be willing and able to implement the decisions."

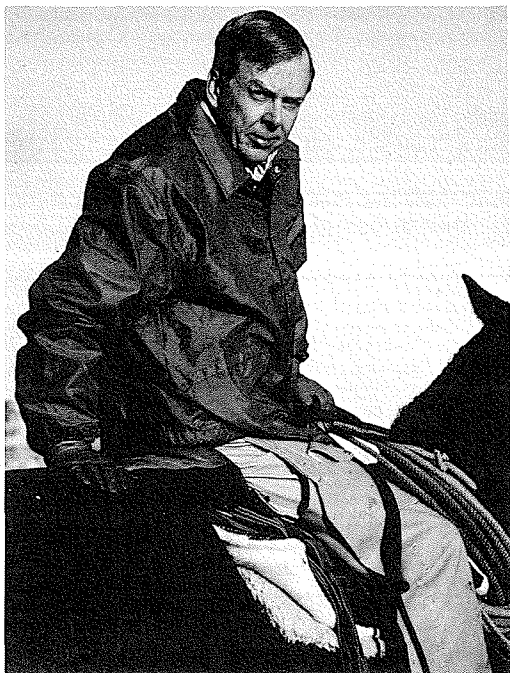
## ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

### *Corporate Takeovers*

"The Problem of Corporate Takeovers: What Is To Be Done?" by Peter F. Drucker, in *The Public Interest* (Winter 1986), 10 East 53rd St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Corporate "raiders" have become the bad boys of Wall Street. Since 1980, they have forced unwanted corporate mergers on 400 to 500 companies, or "targets," including Gulf, Union Oil, and the Bendix Corporation.

During these "hostile takeovers," a "raider"—either another company or an individual speculator—acquires a majority share of the target company's stock by offering shareholders above-market prices, almost always with borrowed cash (typically between \$1 billion and \$4 billion). If the raider succeeds, then the debt incurred by the stock acquisition falls on the



*T. Boone Pickens, 57, chairman of Mesa Petroleum and a noted champion of corporate takeovers. Takeovers are good for America, he says, because wealth tied up in "over-capitalized corporations" can be reinvested "in more productive areas of the economy."*

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target company. On the other hand, if the raider fails (perhaps outbid by a "white knight" corporation invited in by the target company), it can still turn a profit by selling back, at a higher price, the shares it bought.

What has prompted this outbreak of corporate cannibalism? Drucker, who teaches management at the Claremont Graduate School, sees a conjunction of causes.

First, owing to the cumulative effects of post-Vietnam inflation, the cost of capital has outstripped the price of goods produced. "It thus becomes economical," observes Drucker, "to buy already existing capital assets rather than to invest in new facilities and new machines." Many big, integrated corporations (especially in the steel and petroleum industries) have become easy prey to breakup or acquisition. Furthermore, in today's remote world of "corporate capitalism," Drucker asserts, the senior-level management of a company is quite often "isolated and has lost its support base, in its own board of directors, among its own stockholders, and among its own employees."

A tailwind for many raiders is easy access to cash. By using the assets of their targets as collateral, they have little trouble securing high-interest loans from U.S. commercial banks. And although most stockholders realize that such takeovers hurt the target company, they usually go along with the raider's above-market bid. The reason: Most "stockholders" today are giant pension funds; their managers' main goal is to maximize profits and fatten their funds' portfolios.

Drucker sees such hostile takeovers exacting sizable costs, notably the diversion of capital from research and development and the gutting of large firms. "More and more [U.S.] businesses . . . are not being run for business results but for protection against a hostile takeover." To fend off raiders, Drucker suggests that companies issue more stock to employees. Another option is to limit the voting power inherent in some kinds of stock, making it difficult (or impossible) for outsiders simply to *buy* control. The United States could also create a "takeover panel" (as Britain has done) to oversee all large mergers.

Unless something is done to curb this speculative orgy, Drucker says, the American people may lose faith in the free enterprise system.

### *Big Spenders*

"Spending Habits of American Consumers" by David E. Bloom and Sanders D. Korenman, in *American Demographics* (Mar. 1986), P.O. Box 68, Ithaca, N.Y. 14851.

For the American consumer, the years from 1973 to 1983 produced a roller-coaster economy. Two major oil price increases (1973 and 1979), seven years of double-digit inflation (1974-81), and record high interest rates (1979-82) culminated in the nation's worst slump (1981-82) since the Great Depression.

Yet, during these tumultuous times, observe Bloom and Korenman, both Harvard economists, the spending patterns of U.S. consumers showed "little overall change." After analyzing the Bureau of Labor Statis-

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tics' Consumer Expenditure Survey (1982-83), the authors report that Americans still devoted 50 percent of their expenditures to housing and transportation (up from 47 percent in 1972), 17 percent to food (down from 18 percent), and 5.5 percent to apparel (down from eight percent).

At the same time, however, real income in the United States fell 20 percent. Consumers cut back their spending on gasoline and motor oil by one-third (as prices soared by 240 percent) and health care services by one-fourth (those costs rose by 153 percent). Americans also offset above-average prices for meat, fish, and sugar by buying more poultry, eggs, fruits, and vegetables. All told, U.S. households curtailed consumption by 12 percent. But they also saved less money. Whereas the typical household spent 76 percent of its after-tax income in 1972-73, it was paying out 84 percent by 1982-83.

In the wake of the "baby boom"—Americans aged 26-32 who helped to expand U.S. domestic markets—lies a "birth dearth." Both the average age of U.S. consumers and the proportion of "two-earner" households promise to rise. As one result, the authors predict a greater share of consumer expenditures going to goods and services used in leisure time, such as videocassettes and sports equipment. Savings may rise too.

*'Outsourcing'*

"The Hollow Corporation" in *Business Week*  
(Mar. 3, 1986), 1221 Avenue of the Americas,  
New York, N.Y. 10020.

U.S. manufacturers used to make everything from computers to safety pins in domestic plants. Not anymore. Even established giants such as General Electric and General Motors are shifting factories overseas, becoming what a *Business Week* special report calls "hollow corporations."

Lured by cheap labor, U.S. companies are going abroad to make not only components but finished products. General Electric, for example, will close down its last domestic color-TV plant this summer, moving its television assembly to Japan. Thanks in large part to such "outsourcing," manufacturing accounted (in current dollars) for only 21 percent of the U.S. gross national product (GNP) in 1985, down from 30 percent in 1953.

Some economists claim that low-wage manufacturing overseas will make U.S. industries more competitive. The authors disagree. "Foreign plants," they declare, "spawn their own [future] competition by creating a local pool of managers and skilled technicians." Furthermore, a shift in any manufacturing sector has a ripple effect: *Imported* cars require no U.S. ore, no U.S. steel, and no U.S. machine tools. Data Resources Inc. estimates that each \$1 billion worth of imported autos costs the overall U.S. economy \$2.43 billion.

The authors place little faith in the "service economy" as a source of future U.S. economic strength. The retail and wholesale trades, transportation, communications, finance, and personal services now generate 68 percent of the GNP and will provide 90 percent of all new jobs over the next decade. But these jobs, on average, pay less than the current U.S. average hourly wage (\$8.58) for production workers. The service indus-

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tries, moreover, show low productivity gains and produce few technological innovations. Finally, no assurance exists that these companies will fend off the international competition that now threatens U.S. manufacturing.

One way to revive domestic manufacturing would be to create fully automated factories, thereby drastically reducing labor costs. Computer-integrated production would control everything from design to distribution and grant management unprecedented flexibility. At Vought Aero Products Division, for example, a \$10.1 million, eight-machine system turns out 564 parts for the B-1B bomber. But the cost of such high-tech machinery can run into the billions of dollars.

To turn such technological dreams into reality, the federal government should push an "industrial policy" that favors research and development and long-term capital investment. Simply allowing the U.S. manufacturing base to shrink, write the authors, is "an abdication of responsibility to future investors, workers, and consumers."

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## SOCIETY

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### *Teen-age Troubles*

"The Declining Well-Being of American Adolescents" by Peter Uhlenberg and David Eggebeen, in *The Public Interest* (Winter 1986), 10 East 53rd St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Pointing to "leading indicators" of child welfare, social scientists and Washington policy-makers predicted great progress for America's youth during the 1960s and '70s.

Indeed, the proportion of white 16- and 17-year-olds living in homes with poverty or large families or poorly educated parents—all factors believed to crimp a teen-ager's prospects—dropped from 68 percent in 1960 to 37 percent in 1980. Meanwhile, expenditures per pupil in the nation's high schools nearly doubled; in 1980 dollars, the average swelled from \$1,248 to \$2,491. All told, 20 federal agencies now administer some 260 programs designed to benefit young Americans.

Despite such striking improvements, write Uhlenberg and Eggebeen, both Harvard sociologists, the well-being of America's youths (not just minority youths) has actually shown a "marked deterioration" over the last quarter century.

Scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test, a standardized college entrance exam, fell steadily between 1960 and 1982 (verbal scores by 11.1 percent, math scores by 6.4 percent). Fewer high school students now make it through to graduation; between 1970 and 1980, the percentage of (white) 18-year-olds holding high school diplomas declined by five percent. Worse, since 1960 the rates of juvenile crime and delinquency, unmarried (white) teen-age pregnancy, and youth mortality from homicides and suicides have all more than doubled.

What went wrong? The authors blame a breakdown in family ties, specifically a weakening of the bonds between parent and child. From 1960

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to 1980, the proportion of children under 18 years of age who experienced their parents' divorce increased by 140 percent. During that same period, the proportion of mothers in the labor force with children under 18 years of age rose from 28 percent to 57 percent; no evidence exists that fathers are filling the gap in parental supervision.

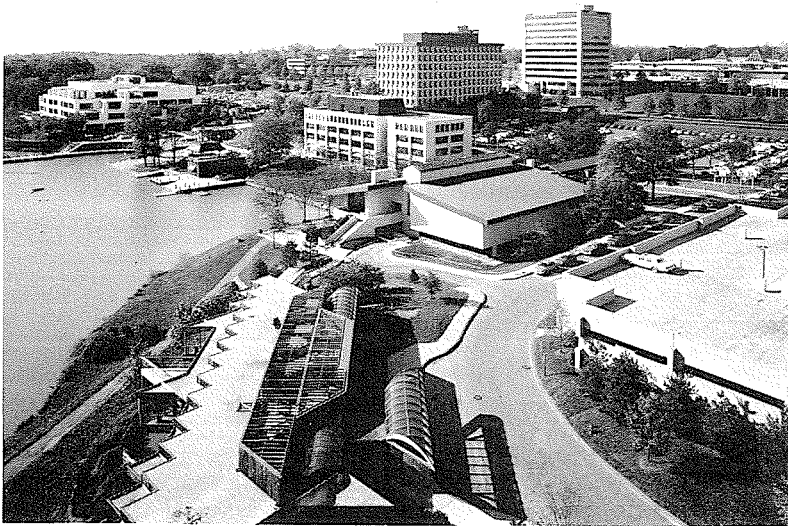
Citing a 1981 study by pollster Daniel Yankelovich, the authors observe that parents are clearly putting their own "self-fulfillment" ahead of their "commitment to sacrificing personal pursuits for their children's welfare." Until parenthood once again takes higher priority, no amount of government effort will improve the lot of the nation's youth.

### *City Sprawl*

"The Cities of the Future" by Don McLeod, in *Insight* (Feb. 17, 1986), 3600 New York Ave. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.

Urban planners call it the "balkanization of the suburbs."

America's landscape has become a patchwork of urban "regions." The Census Bureau can scarcely determine demographically where Dallas ends and Fort Worth begins—even though maps show 30 miles between the downtown centers of the two Texas cities. By the year 2000, demographers predict that Los Angeles, in effect, will be one big super-city, spanning 100 miles (from inland San Bernadino to the Pacific coast).



*One answer to suburban sprawl: the planned community. In 1967, the Rouse Company opened Columbia, Md., 26 miles from the Capitol. Today 66,000 people live there in 22,670 dwellings, with three lakes and 18 public pools.*

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Much of this "urban sprawl," notes McLeod, senior writer for *Insight*, stems from a growth of the U.S. population, up from 151 million in 1950 to 236 million in 1984. Another factor is economics: It is more convenient and less expensive to set up shop on the outskirts of town. Pepsico, Texaco, IBM, and Xerox, for example, have all built new headquarters roughly 20 to 30 miles outside of New York City.

Urbanizing the once-tranquil world of green lawns and tract housing raises the tax base but may lead to "suburban blight." In many suburban counties, traffic congestion is now common, along with rising drug use, deteriorating streets, uncollected trash, and pollution. Most politicians from these areas eye the problems of overcrowded schools, insufficient water supplies, and rising crime rates with "tunnel vision," refusing to pool area resources with those of neighboring localities. Moreover, as time goes on, the suburbs tend to prosper as the cities' tax bases erode; as a result, city museums, libraries, and theaters are in trouble, with few suburban replacements in sight.

To ease such pains, McLeod urges greater financial cooperation. In Seattle, Wash. (pop. 490,000), for example, the suburbs of surrounding King County (pop. 1.5 million) have helped finance, among other things, the \$62 million Kingdome, an enormous enclosed downtown stadium, and the Seattle Zoo, which attracts 800,000 tourists a year.

### *The Merits of Merit Pay*

"Merit Pay and the Evaluation Problem: Why Most Merit Pay Plans Fail and a Few Survive" by Richard J. Murnane and David K. Cohen, in *Harvard Educational Review* (Feb. 1986), Longfellow Hall, 13 Appian Way, Cambridge, Mass. 02138-3752.

Every organization wants to encourage good work by its employees. But in the case of America's public school teachers, the difficulty lies in devising the right incentives.

One oft-proposed incentive is merit pay: First-rate teachers (determined by their students' performance and faculty evaluations) get higher salaries and bonuses than do their less successful colleagues. In 1918, 48 percent of U.S. public school districts experimented with merit pay. Yet, by 1953, all but four percent had reverted to uniform salary systems, where teachers with equivalent credentials and experience received equal rates of pay.

Then came the 1957 Soviet launching of Sputnik. Fearing a Soviet "edge" in education, Americans scrambled to upgrade the nation's schools. Roughly 10 percent of U.S. school districts tried again to set wages according to merit. Today, despite widespread alarm over a "rising tide of mediocrity," only one percent of all U.S. school districts have adopted merit pay programs to improve teacher performance.

Why? Murnane and Cohen, an economist and a historian, respectively, at Harvard, contend that a merit-based salary scale for teachers is inherently flawed. Rewarding teachers for improvements in student test scores, for example, spurs them to devote their time only to those students whose

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marks seem likely to improve. It also puts success in test-taking ahead of other classroom goals, such as reading and writing skills.

Basing teacher bonuses on supervisors' evaluations also has pitfalls. What constitutes "effective teaching," observe the authors, is open to broad interpretation. And unexpectedly low appraisals can discourage some effective teachers and generate resentment among others.

Yet the authors do find some variations that work. Surveying six districts where various merit pay plans were in place, they found, for instance, that offering extra money for additional chores (supervising students' extracurricular activities or community service) gave good teachers a chance to augment their incomes. In some schools, teachers designed the evaluation process, creating a better rapport between themselves and administrators. By making teachers more accountable for their work, such evaluations strengthened parents' confidence in the schools.

Cash incentives, the authors conclude, are not necessarily the key to better teaching. But making teacher evaluations common practice will benefit the nation's educators—and, in turn, its students.

### *A Great Society For the Nonpoor*

"What Antipoverty Policies Cost the Nonpoor"  
by Robert H. Haveman, in *Challenge* (Jan.-Feb.  
1986), 80 Business Park Dr., Armonk, N.Y.  
10504.

The debate over Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs—Washington's helter-skelter attempts, beginning in the 1960s, to "end" poverty—has lately bloomed again.

Conservative critics argue, among other things, that the cost of the War on Poverty unfairly burdens America's nonpoor taxpayers.

Yet Haveman, professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, contends that such critics have not fully accounted for the Great Society's spillover into middle-class life. Examining the aggregate effects of social welfare expenditures between 1965 and 1980, he disagrees that "the Great Society initiative has imposed large net losses on the nonpoor."

Measured in current dollars, Washington spent \$77 billion in 1965 on social programs, versus \$493 billion in 1980. Depending on accounting methods, Haveman calculates that losses to America's nonpoor totaled between \$142 billion and \$232 billion from 1965 to 1980. These losses included tax hikes ranging from \$115 billion to \$195 billion. Yet the nonpoor made some gains as well. Their *benefits* from subsidized education, medical care, and productivity increases from federally trained low-income workers came to somewhere between \$93 billion and \$145 billion.

On balance, then, the Great Society "cost" the nonpoor between \$49 and \$87 billion, a sum equivalent to two to three percent of America's total personal income in 1980. Not "an unreasonable price to pay" for the net gains experienced by the poor and the nonpoor, says Haveman.

Washington can best serve the interests of all Americans, the author concludes, by improving the nation's antipoverty programs rather than merely abolishing them in one fell swoop.

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## PRESS & TELEVISION

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### *Badmouthing Mr. President*

"The Six O'Clock Presidency: Patterns of Network News Coverage of the President" by Fred Smoller, in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (Winter 1986), 208 East 75th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

As presented on the nightly TV network news, presidential faux pas have contributed some less-than-august images to American history: Gerald Ford stumbling out of Air Force One; Jimmy Carter fending off a "killer rabbit"; Ronald Reagan bumbling at press conferences.

The public may be amused, but Smoller, a political scientist at Chapman College, is not. He argues that such gratuitously negative TV coverage of American presidents is now the norm, and that it perverts the political process by unraveling "the careers of individual presidents and the public's support for the . . . presidency."

Each night, about one-fifth of each network's early evening news broadcast features the president, his policies, the First Family, or the White House staff. Smoller examined roughly 5,500 news stories in these categories, culled from "CBS Evening News" transcripts between January 1969 and January 1985. Rating each story, he found that, collectively, 55 percent were "neutral," 18 percent were "positive," and 27 percent were "negative"—an unfavorable balance overall.

Moreover, Smoller claims that CBS's news coverage not only grew less flattering from 1969 to 1985, it also gave each successive president a



*June 1, 1975: Arriving in Salzburg, Austria, for a meeting with President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, President Gerald Ford slips as he descends from Air Force One.*



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bigger ration of poor coverage during the "honeymoon" (the first 100 days in office). Furthermore, "no president since Richard Nixon (first term) has received a net positive portrayal on the evening news after his first three months in office."

Smoller does not envision an "evil or disloyal" conspiracy at the networks' headquarters in New York. Rather he blames television's own idiosyncracies as a news medium. To hold viewers, television news focuses on events that lend themselves to "dramatic" film clips; it favors conflict and controversy over mundane policy-making. During the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, for instance, Americans saw little of Carter's behind-the-scenes efforts to free the 52 hostages. But they routinely got an eyeful of angry Iranian students burning the American flag—and a White House correspondent depicting Carter as something of a hostage himself.

How can presidents avoid being sideswiped by TV? Smoller suggests a look at the tactics of President Reagan, who has received even more negative TV coverage than Nixon, Ford, or Carter. By taking a "controlled" approach to the media—using weekly radio broadcasts, televised presidential addresses—and by carefully shaping the cameras' access to himself and his key aides, Reagan has held on to his popularity and triumphed as the Great Communicator.

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## RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

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### *China's Churches*

"Religion in Post-Mao China" by Merle Goldman, in *Annals* (Jan. 1986), 3937 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

Under communism, religious groups seeking to practice their faith in China have gotten no encouragement from Beijing.

Until recently, that is. In April 1985, Zhao Fusan, deputy secretary of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, rejected Marx's notion that religion "is the opium of the people." Instead, he called religion an "integral part" of civilization.

To say the least, such a turnaround was unexpected. Goldman, a Boston University historian, believes that disillusionment with Marxist rhetoric and the chaotic Cultural Revolution (1966–76) has rekindled spiritual yearnings among the Chinese, many of whom feel "ideologically empty."

As a result, China's Protestant population—roughly 700,000 during the 1950s—now surpasses three million. Chinese Catholics now number about three million too. Christian seminaries have reopened (including the Nanjing Theological Seminary); so has the Buddhist Academy in Beijing. Young Men's and Women's Christian Associations have been revived in Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Tianjin.

From the mid-1950s until Mao Zedong's death in 1976, the Communist regime struggled to expunge all religion from China. Christian missionaries, even those who had founded hospitals and schools, were ousted or imprisoned. With the onset of the Cultural Revolution, study of the Bible or

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Koran became a crime; Red Guards leveled churches, burned church documents, imprisoned, tortured, and killed clergy and laity. The nation's 100 million Buddhists and 20-30 million Muslims fared only slightly better.

But with the rise of Deng Xiaoping in 1977 as Vice Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, persecutions came to a halt. Deng denounced Mao, permitted the printing of holy texts, allowed churches to be rebuilt, and promoted public worship.

In Goldman's opinion, however, Deng's support stems not so much from "a new appreciation of religion" as from a desire to assert Party control over it. Some Christian clergymen have been arrested for refusing to participate in government-sponsored groups or possessing unauthorized editions of the Bible. Restorations of ancient Buddhist temples may be aimed at attracting tourism.

In one sense, Goldman says, Beijing's basic attitude toward religion has not changed: Religion is still a political tool.

### *Freedom's Flaws*

"Authority, Autonomy, and Choice: The Role of Consent in the Moral and Political Visions of Franz Kafka and Richard Posner" by Robin West, in *Harvard Law Review* (Dec. 1985), Gannett House, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

Should the law permit informed, consenting adults to pursue any dangerous course of action they choose?

Some libertarian philosophers and legal scholars answer Yes. Richard Posner, a federal judge and author of *The Economics of Justice* (1983), argues that protection of such personal "autonomy" should be a guiding legal principle. He assumes that people will only choose to do what will "improve their well-being." He infers that, ideally, the law should allow for as many "opportunities for choice," or "acts of consent," as possible. Requiring no-fault auto insurance for licensed drivers, compensating victims of fraud or malpractice—such issues should be settled whenever possible in a "free market," not a court.

The trouble with Posner's laissez-faire argument, observes West, who teaches law at Stanford, is that it assumes all people are "rational." Not all people are, under all circumstances. "Wives submit to abusive husbands; employees consent to exploitative and humiliating work environments; consumers consent to sales of defective, dangerous, and over-priced merchandise." Fear, hysteria, masochistic compulsions often drive men and women to do very bizarre things. The purchaser of a \$5 lottery ticket may reckon that he will lose his money; but the patron of a San Francisco bathhouse may refuse to recognize the risk and consequences of catching Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Moreover, the reckless actions of individuals can inflict heavy costs on other citizen-taxpayers, in the form of medical bills, drug rehabilitation programs, damaged property, or simply fear.

For a vision of what such a society of unrestrained opportunism would be like, West turns to the novelist Franz Kafka (1883-1924). In Kafka's fictional world, "Masters, slaves, criminals and law-abiding citizens all con-

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sent to fates over which they have no control: The powerful put themselves in servitude, and slaves consent to their own bondage." Kafka's story *The Hunger Artist* depicts a man who starves himself for show and profit; in *The Judgment*, a boy agrees to drown himself as punishment for being, as his father insists, devilish.

In both Posner's and Kafka's imagined worlds, says West, people live without constraints. Yet such freedom is fatally flawed: "Good and evil, right and wrong, lose all meaning when all that matters is whether . . . people get exactly what they *think* they want."

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### *AI: Going Nowhere Fast?*

"Why Computers May Never Think Like People" by Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus, in *Technology Review*, (Jan. 1986), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rm. 10-140, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

A quarter century ago, researchers in "artificial intelligence" (AI)—a branch of computer science attempting to reproduce the process of thought—predicted that, within two decades, computers would be able to do everything humans can do.

This breakthrough has not occurred. The Dreyfuses, professors of philosophy and engineering, respectively, at the University of California, Berkeley, say that it never will, above all because man is not simply a "thinking machine."

The chief trouble is computers' dependence on rules. Humans learn tasks (riding a bike, playing chess, reading) partly by memorizing instructions, but once they "get the hang of it," so to speak, they switch to instinct. Such is *not* the case with computers. Unable to distinguish quickly relevant information from "noise," or to "see" patterns at a glance, the digitized programs remain mired in analysis.

As yet, no computer has made the leap from beginner status to genuine expertise. Some chess and checkers programs, employing myriad "brute force" calculations, have competed successfully in tournaments, but most "expert systems" still fall short. Internist-1, a medical diagnosis program, cannot outperform even novice physicians. In one test, it misdiagnosed 18 out of 43 cases. Young clinicians at Massachusetts General Hospital erred 15 times; staff doctors, eight.

Also hampering computers is their inability to grasp "context"—to "read" texts or human situations correctly. Many of man's perceptions draw on an acquired array of "obvious," but crucial, facts. Since computers do not know what it is like to be human, they cannot comprehend, or address, some simple notions, such as the phrase "love hurts sometimes." Solving equations is easy by comparison.

Yet AI research continues. By the end of 1986, the Pentagon will have spent roughly \$300 million to develop a Strategic Computing Plan that

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embraces autonomous land, air, and sea vehicles capable of attack and reconnaissance.

Needless to say, the fathers of AI research (Alan Newell, Herbert Simon, Marvin Minsky) disagree with the Dreyfuses. Patrick Winston, Minsky's successor as chief of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology AI Laboratory, sees it this way: Just as the Wright Brothers' crude 1903 flying machine led to today's jumbo jets, so contemporary AI researchers are nurturing a technology that will soon bear valuable fruit.

### *Tenth Dimension*

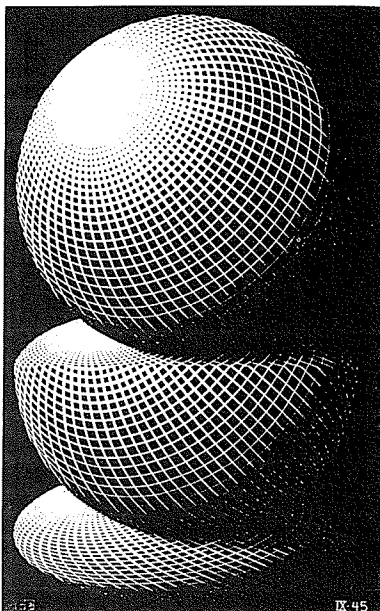
"Life in the Tenth Dimension" in *The Economist* (Jan. 18, 1986), 25 St. James's St., London, SW1A 1HG, England.

Under normal circumstances, most people experience a four-dimensional world (three dimensions in space and one in time). Most students envision the building blocks of matter as little "bits," with electrons circling an atomic nucleus much as the Earth orbits the Sun.

Such notions will soon be considered obsolete. Contemporary physicists, like their forebears during the 1920s, are reinterpreting the laws of Nature. The emerging theory shows the components of atoms (protons, neutrons, and electrons) and their building blocks (quarks and leptons) to be minute "strings" of energy, rapidly spinning in circles. Each is less than a billion billion billionth of a meter long. The theory also posits a universe of 10 dimensions—most of them beyond our perception.

This bizarre picture is the culmination of a century-old attempt to find a Grand Unified Theory (GUT), which physicists hope will explain how the

*What might a 10-dimensional world look like? According to some physicists, scattered throughout space are seven-dimensional spheres, each so small that human senses (and instruments) cannot detect them. Here, artist M. C. Escher depicts a microcosm of warped spheres.*



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disparate forces of gravity and magnetism, and those forces that bind atoms, all fit together. James Clerk Maxwell first searched for a GUT in 1861, when he observed that electricity and magnetism were really two aspects of the same phenomenon (hence the term electromagnetism).

A half century later, Albert Einstein tried to join gravity to electromagnetism. He could not. Instead he described gravity not as a "force" that pulls bodies together, but as a "curve" in space that alters the motion of all objects. In 1919, a Russian mathematician, Theodor Kaluza, proposed a GUT. But it had a major drawback, setting the universe in five dimensions (using five bits of information to account for all physical events) instead of the traditional four. A Swedish physicist, Oskar Klein, supported the Kaluza theory in 1924. However, most scientists dismissed it.

During the 1970s, physicists revived the Kaluza-Klein model, though it still could not unify all of Nature's forces with one overarching explanation. But in August 1984, Michael Green and John Schwarz, physicists at Queen Mary College, London, and the California Institute of Technology, respectively, discovered that by expanding the number of spatial dimensions in the Kaluza-Klein model to 10, and by interpreting subatomic matter as "strings" of energy (instead of particles), many of the mathematical contradictions faded.

There are still kinks in the model. In its present form, it cannot account for all matter in the universe. But the study of string theory is becoming a booming field. Green, Schwarz, Edward Witten of Princeton, and Stephen Hawking of Cambridge are among scores of physicists trying to unravel the theory's knots. The solution, they say, is not far off.

## Grafts for The Brain

"Spare Parts for Damaged Brains" by Edwin Kiester, Jr., in *Science* 86 (Mar. 1986), 1101 Vermont Ave. N.W., 10th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Injury to the brain was once deemed irreversible—and for many severe traumas, it still is. But scientists are now more optimistic.

The latest prospect: brain grafts.

The concept is somewhat unsettling: to bring tissue from another part of the body into the "seat of consciousness." Yet, reports Kiester, a contributor to *Science* 86, the idea of brain grafts is not new. In 1903, a researcher at the University of Chicago first injected fetal tissue into rats' brains. Such operations were said to be impossible in human beings, born with a fixed supply of brain cells that slowly die off. Although brain cells cannot regenerate like, say, skin cells, research by the late 1960s showed that the brain can repair some injuries. Geoffrey Raisman of Cambridge University noted "collateral sprouting" in neurons near damaged areas. The brain cells sent fibers into the hurt region in an attempt to make up for the "lost" functions.

Today, Lars Olson and Ake Seiger of Stockholm's Karolinska Institute are grafting adrenal gland tissue into the brains of people with Parkinson's disease, a condition afflicting roughly one million Americans—mostly over 50—with muscular rigidity and tremors.

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Caused by the destruction of brain cells in the substantia nigra (an area just above the spinal cord) that secrete the chemical dopamine, Parkinson's symptoms abate when the level of dopamine is raised. Since the adrenal glands (located above the kidneys) also produce dopamine, its cells are excellent candidates for transplants.

Olson and Seiger tried adrenal-brain grafts in rats and partially reversed Parkinson's debilitating effects. In 1982, they made the leap to humans, grafting adrenal cells into the brains of Parkinson's patients for whom conventional treatments had failed. All four test cases showed improvement. The worst among them, a 46-year-old woman who could not leave her bed or swallow food, could move her hands freely for the first time in years. Her most dramatic improvements faded after four months, but her condition has not deteriorated beyond the pre-graft stage.

Because of their temporary effects and experimental status, cautions Kiester, brain grafts should not be regarded as a miracle cure. Some scientists speculate that the new techniques may one day restore sight to the blind, help the disabled to walk, or halt Alzheimer's syndrome—all currently beyond the reach of modern science.

### *Progress in Weather-Watching*

"The Weather Watchers" by Gordon Williams, in *The Atlantic* (Mar. 1986), 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. 02116; "The Meteorological Satellite: Overview of 25 Years of Operation" by W. L. Smith et al., in *Science* (Jan. 31, 1986), 1333 H St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

On April 1, 1960, TIROS-1, the first primitive U.S. weather satellite, took its place in the sky, relaying images of cloud formations to forecasters on Earth twice a day.

In 1986, four U.S. meteorological satellites provide the National Weather Service with some 100,000 readings a day, including information on the Earth's ozone layers and its soil moisture. The data, collected by nearly 300 weather bureaus around the nation, are transmitted to the National Meteorological Center in Camp Springs, Md., where a Cyber 205 supercomputer compiles forecast charts. With 5,000 employees and a budget exceeding \$300 million, notes Williams, an ABC News correspondent, the nation's Weather Service is on its way to becoming a major-league scientific organization.

The biggest advance came with the 1966 launching of the Applications Technology Satellite (ATS-1) into geosynchronous orbit, roughly 22,300 miles above sea level. Infrared cameras made visible the night skies. Scientists can now monitor cloud formations continuously. More frequent satellite transmissions (every 15 to 20 minutes) allowed weathermen to discern jet streams, the onset of thunderstorms, even details of ocean currents. Two Geostationary Operation Environmental Satellites (GOES East and GOES West), first launched in 1980, can record changes in atmospheric density and the height and distribution of clouds.

According to Smith and his colleagues, meteorologists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), better forecasting has saved an untold number of

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lives. Through GOES, the National Severe Storms Forecast Center can better detect "squall lines," precursors to the deadly tornados, hailstorms, and thunderstorms that can form when air fronts converge. NOAA 6 and NOAA 9, two polar satellites, provide a close-up view; they circle the globe from pole to pole every 102 minutes at an altitude of 500 miles.

On the drawing board, Smith notes, are satellites with sharper sensors and higher resolution. Three new NOAA satellites, to be launched during 1990-92, will provide the first accurate all-weather temperature measurements from space and, among other things, determine the height of ocean waves to within half a meter.

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### *Fossil Fuels?*

"The Origin of Petroleum" by David Osborne, in *The Atlantic* (Feb. 1986), 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. 02116.

Following the much-publicized energy crisis of the 1970s, many Western pundits warned that diminishing petroleum reserves might threaten future economic growth.

Such fears are unfounded, says Thomas Gold, a Cornell astrophysicist. Indeed, he claims that the Earth still harbors an enormous untapped supply of oil and gas.

The prevailing geologists' theory of oil and natural gas formation, notes Osborne, a contributor to the *Atlantic*, holds that hydrocarbons come from plant and animal remains buried in sediment millions of years ago. Cooked by the Earth's internal heat and pressure, the organic matter forms a tarry substance called kerogen. Depending on underground conditions, the kerogen will eventually yield either oil or methane (an odorless, colorless, combustible gas), which then migrates through layers of rock toward the Earth's surface.

Gold questions this "fossil fuels" theory. Why, for instance, has some oil turned up in areas where vegetation did not exist, or why have hydrocarbons been found on lifeless planets and meteorites? After studying gas formation on other planets, he guessed that a similar process is taking place on Earth: Primordial materials, cooking near the planet's core, are slowly seeping upward through cracks in its crust.

Among other things, Gold's theory clarifies why so many oil and gas reservoirs are found near continental faults, where tectonic plates push against each other (e.g., the Middle East, Texas, the Rocky Mountains). It explains why fossil fuel deposits are usually stacked on top of each other, and how 25 oil fields in the Middle East (of some 30,000 worldwide) can contain almost 60 percent of known oil reserves.

Gold's highly controversial theory is being put to the test. North of Stockholm, the Swedes are drilling into a crater called the Siljan Ring. Some 360 million years ago, a meteor crashed into Sweden's granite bedrock, leaving a 26-mile-wide crater of gravel. "If oil and gas were migrat-

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ing up from the Earth's depths," writes Osborne, "that pile would provide a perfect migration route." Seven test wells have already turned up evidence of methane.

If Gold is right, says Osborne, the implications are startling. Huge natural gas reservoirs may exist where no one has thought to look. East Africa, now poverty-stricken, could be resource rich. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries could get edged out of the energy market. Nuclear power and synthetic fuels would be unnecessary.

### *Radiation At Home*

"The Indoor Radon Story" by Anthony V. Nero, Jr., in *Technology Review* (Jan. 1986), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rm. 10-140, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

Few phenomena are as worrisome to Americans as radiation, commonly associated with nuclear power plants.

Yet the greatest source of radiation exposure for most Americans may be the air in their own homes.

"Significant amounts of radon—a natural radioactive gas—accumulate in our houses simply because we tend to build them on the largest source of radioactivity around: the ground," according to Nero, a physicist at the University of California's Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory. He argues that the cancer risk posed by indoor radon may, in some cases, be greater than that created by other well-documented pollutants.

The decay of radium, a chemical element found in small amounts throughout the Earth's crust, produces radon gas. Temperature and pressure differences inside a house tend to suck radon gas out of the soil, especially through cracks in a house's foundation. The indoor concentration of radon depends, for the most part, on the potency of the radium source in the underlying soil.

One home in Maryland posted radon levels 20 times higher than normal, the "radiation equivalent of having a Three Mile Island [TMI] accident ... occur in the neighborhood once a week," Nero observes. (The 1979 TMI power plant accident exposed local residents to only 20 millirems of radiation, roughly four percent of the annual exposure limit set by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the public.) All told, Nero estimates that radon in houses may cause 10,000 cases of lung cancer per year in the United States.

One to three percent of the 80 million private and commercial buildings in the United States may have unhealthy levels of ambient indoor radiation (above eight pico-curies per liter of air). Happily, the average single-family home (with only 1.5 pico-curies per liter of air) is considered safe, with radiation at less than one-twelfth of the maximum level stipulated for a workplace by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Nero suggests that there is no cause for alarm. The problem is not new: Man has lived with radon ever since he began to build houses on soil. Moreover, the average estimated risk of cancer from indoor radon is only 0.3 percent over a lifetime—compared with a one to two percent risk of death posed by driving a car, and roughly a 25 percent mortality risk associated with smoking cigarettes and cigars.



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*Atget's Art*

"The Use of History" by Molly Nesbit, in *Art in America* (Feb. 1986), 980 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10021.

In 1926, when American artist Man Ray first published a photograph by Eugène Atget, an unknown French photographer, Atget insisted: "Don't put my name on it. These are simply documents I make."

Today, Atget (1856–1927) is considered to be not only a leading documentary photographer of the 20th century but also a significant artist. Nesbit, a Barnard art historian, argues that the two, seemingly contradictory, roles actually complemented each other: Atget's inability to be an impartial bystander, a weakness in his documentary work, helped to distinguish him as an artist-photographer.

Orphaned early in life, Atget worked as a sailor, then as an actor, touring France with an itinerant theater company. But his stubby physique limited his stage career, and, at the age of 42, he moved to Paris and took up photography. Museums and historical societies became his chief clients; they hired him to record various aspects of the city's rapidly changing architecture, entertainment, and transportation system.

Meanwhile, artists such as George Braque and Maurice Utrillo were urging him to do more than just documentaries. Occasionally they painted from his photographs. Such encouragement, plus a commitment to leftist politics, led Atget to abandon the "bourgeois" world of *Vieux Paris* for



*Joueur d'orgue (1898–99). Atget went to Paris in 1898 to photograph monuments but soon devoted himself to the portrayal of ordinary folk, such as this organ grinder and his assistant.*

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the daily struggle of the city's working class. Albums of "modern life" that he prepared for the Bibliothèque Nationale show ragpickers in poor neighborhoods, not the *belles jardins* that the archivists had sought. Atget's 1911 album on shopping ignored the *grands boulevards*, featuring instead the proletarians—*pommes frites* stands and junkyards.

Destitute during the World War I years, he accepted a commission in 1921 to document Paris's red light district. He hated the assignment (mistaken once as a customer, he was arrested) but produced fine pictures, including "Brother, Versailles" (1921). Still poverty-stricken, he died six years later.

Much of Atget's success, beyond his careful eye and sense of history, observes Nesbit, stems from his ability to evoke the prevailing mood in turn-of-the-century Paris.

*Milan Kundera*

"The Ambiguities of Milan Kundera" by Roger Kimball, in *The New Criterion* (Jan. 1986), 850  
Seventh Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019.

Czech novelist Milan Kundera has won his share of literary laurels. When his latest work, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, appeared in 1984, one enthusiastic reviewer went so far as to call him "the world's greatest living writer."

Kimball, a contributor to the *New Criterion*, agrees that Kundera is "indisputably a writer of great talent." Yet he feels that the political dimensions of Kundera's work raise troubling questions about his "good faith and ideological motives."

Kundera's first novel, *The Joke*, came out in 1967, just prior to a period of relative political freedom—the Prague Spring. After Soviet troops occupied the country in August 1968, Kundera's book—which ridiculed the Czech Communist Party—was banned, and Kundera himself was fired from his teaching post at the Prague Film School. Denied the right to hold a job, he left Czechoslovakia for France in 1975.

Kundera's works draw heavily on his experiences under totalitarian rule, weaving in bits of history, philosophy, psychological conjecture, and autobiography to portray communism's dehumanizing effect on the individual. Yet, writes Kimball, Kundera also "maintains a fundamentally equivocal attitude toward the West." When asked if he thought private life was less threatened in the West than in the East, he replied that there was no difference; he compared the intrusiveness of the Western media to the activities of secret police. In *Unbearable Lightness*, he equated the sentimental response of a U.S. senator watching children playing to "the smile Communist statesmen beamed from the height of the reviewing stand to the identically smiling citizens in the parade below."

Kimball criticizes Kundera for wanting "to have it both ways." By drawing what Kimball calls an "absurd" parallel between the failings of totalitarianism and those of democracy, Kundera has won Western admirers on the far Left. In so doing, he has sacrificed the chance to be truly great for the chance to be ideologically popular.

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*Art and Insanity*

"The Artistry of Psychotics" by Rudolf Arnheim, in *American Scientist* (Jan.-Feb. 1986), 345 Whitney Ave., New Haven, Conn. 06511.

The visual landscape of schizophrenics lies beyond the grasp of rational people. Their "cracked" minds, commented British psychiatrist R. D. Laing in 1965, "may let in light which does not enter the intact minds of many sane people."

A half century earlier, such thoughts occurred to Hans Prinzhorn, a Heidelberg psychiatrist with a background in philosophy and art history. He collected some 6,000 artworks, produced between 1890 and 1920, by 516 patients in asylums in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. The collection, which made the rounds in U.S. museums in 1984, reveals much about the nature of mental illness, argues Arnheim, a Harvard art historian.

Prinzhorn's *The Artistry of the Mentally Ill* (1922) stirred up Europe's avant-garde, not least because many paintings in his collection resembled the most advanced cubist and surrealist works. The continent's art elite—Paul Klee, Max Ernst, Jean Arp, René Magritte—especially admired the asylum art's inherent alienation and its divergence from artistic traditions.

Works by patients differed according to their respective afflictions.



*Fear and Death, a schizophrenic's charcoal sketch, from the Prinzhorn collection. Such apparent paranoia, and confusion of animate and inanimate objects, is common among schizophrenics, as well as users of hallucinogens.*

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Manic depressives have wild mood swings, so pictures by them tended to alternate between elation and melancholy, galvanic scribbles juxtaposed with delicate, shadowy lines.

Where schizophrenia was involved, the compositions mirrored the patients' confusion and detachment. Ornate designs, repetitive geometric shapes, arcane symbols, and handwriting filled every inch of the canvases. In a jigsaw puzzle of incongruous interlocking shapes, an arm ends in the head of a snake, fingernails hold eyes, a human figure lies in a shoe.

When Hitler's Nazis came to power, they used the similarity between psychotic and modernist art to justify their persecution of avant-garde artists, depicting both, writes Arnheim, as "degenerate products of diseased minds." Arnheim flatly rejects such a simplistic link between artist and madman. Psychosis can "liberate" the powers of the imagination from social and educational conventions, but it cannot generate genuine artistic talent. If the visionary imagery of the mentally ill sometimes evokes a powerful response, reflects Arnheim, it is "only because it derives from deep-seated psychological sources shared by all human beings."

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### *West Bank Stalemate*

"No Illusions: Israel Reassesses Its Chances for Peace" by Thomas L. Friedman, in *The New York Times Magazine* (Jan. 26, 1986), 229  
West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

June 1986 marks a milestone in Israel's history. The Israelis will have possessed the West Bank of the River Jordan for as long as they lived without it—19 years.

Israel took control of the West Bank after its victory over Egypt, Syria, and Jordan during the 1967 Six-Day War. Since then, the fate of the captured territory has embittered relations not only between Israel and its Arab neighbors but among Israelis themselves. Indeed, according to Friedman, Jerusalem correspondent for the *New York Times*, the "new reality" of Israeli domestic politics, marked by bitter debates about the West Bank's future, looms as one of the biggest stumbling blocks to peace in the Mideast.

Many Israelis no longer put much stock in United Nations Resolution 242 (which affirms Israel's right to exist) or in terms such as "territorial compromise" and "comprehensive settlement." Even the much-hailed 1977 Camp David accords have proved disappointing, bringing no real rapprochement between Israel and Egypt. Today, Israeli opinion on disposition of the West Bank (where some 140,000 Jews now live) is divided into three camps. To the religious Zionists led by the Gush Emunim Party (about 10 percent of the electorate), any territorial compromise is a form of blasphemy. Nationalist members of the Labor, Likud, and Tehiya parties (45 percent of the electorate) view the matter simply as a fight between two groups—Arabs and Israelis—for the same piece of land, which is

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essential to Israel's security.

Israel's "pragmatists" (the remaining 45 percent), in Friedman's opinion, come closest to a workable solution. Their goals are both practical (compromise with the foe) and spiritual (preserve Jewish values). They seek to form an Arab-Israeli condominium, arguing that to suppress the 1.3 million Arabs in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is to betray Israel's humanitarian principles.

If they win the argument, even the pragmatists will find no easy going. Their best bet, says Friedman, may be an "interim" recipe that might include some form of Palestinian autonomy on the West Bank, joint security patrols with Jordan, and Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian agricultural and economic cooperation.

One underlying difficulty since 1967, Friedman concludes, has been the chronic search by Western diplomats and Israelis alike for an "ultimate solution." Yet their grand designs have led, so far, to no solution.

### *Britain's Racial Woes*

"Racial Conflict in Britain" by David Winder, in *The Journal of the Institute for Socioeconomic Studies* (Winter 1986), Airport Rd., White Plains, N.Y. 10604.

Once the hub of an expanding empire, Britain today is having trouble absorbing newcomers from the Asian, African, and Caribbean territories it formerly ruled.

Last summer, frustrations over economic hardship and racial bias led black and Asian residents of London, Liverpool, and Birmingham to riot. Compounding their grievances, observes Winder, a reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor*, was a widespread perception that many white Englishmen had not yet accepted their nonwhite neighbors as "anything more than immigrants."

British citizens of West Indian descent (mainly Jamaican) now number just under one million in the United Kingdom. Together with some 123,000 persons of West African origin (largely from Ghana and Nigeria), they constitute Britain's "Afro-Caribbean" contingent. More unsettling to many Englishmen are recent arrivals from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. In contrast to declining birth rates among Afro-Caribbeans, Asians have steadily increased their share of all births in Britain, from 2.8 percent in 1971 to 4.5 percent in 1982. Even so, blacks and Asians account for only 2.25 million (or four percent) of Britain's 56.4 million citizens.

The minorities, especially blacks, suffer disproportionately from England's current hard times. White Britons are saddled with a jobless rate of 16.1 percent; the West Indian rate is nearly twice as high—31.4 percent. In London's poor Brixton district, or Toxteth in Liverpool, black unemployment has reached 90 percent.

Aggravating black discontent is the progress made by many recent arrivals from Asia. While most blacks rent decrepit housing in slums, more than 70 percent of all British Asians now own their own homes. Asians have also surpassed blacks (and whites in some industries) in employment rates; a large percentage are self-employed, owning small retail shops and various service stores.

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Black hostility toward the Asian newcomers has turned into violence—in riots, mob attacks, and “Paki-bashing.” During the first six months of 1985 alone, 690 cases of arson involved Asians’ homes. Some young blacks now believe that Britain is no longer simply a clear-cut world of “haves and have-nots,” says Winder, “but a three-tiered society in which Whites are first-class citizens, Asians are second-class citizens, and the Blacks are third-class citizens.”

### *Armenia Again?*

“The Armenian Nation and the Ottoman Empire: Roots of Terrorism” by Pierre Papazian, in *The Midwest Quarterly* (Winter 1986), Pittsburg State Univ., Pittsburg, Kans. 66762-5889.

In January 1973, Gourgen Yanikian assassinated the Turkish Consul and Vice-Consul in Los Angeles. Yanikian claimed revenge for the massacre of roughly one million fellow Armenians (half the total Armenian population) by Ottoman Turks in 1915.

Since 1973, at least 41 Turkish diplomats and officials have been slain in more than 200 attacks worldwide. The worst came in July 1983, when Armenian terrorists killed five civilians and wounded 56 others during a bomb attack in Paris’s Orly airport. Claiming responsibility for most of these attacks are the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia and the Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide.

Most journalists find such outbursts perplexing, but Papazian, a historian, does not. Whereas Turkey has, since World War II, enjoyed the international limelight, a free Armenia is just a dim memory. Although the Republic of Armenia was founded in 1918, two years later it became part of Soviet territory.

Armenians, mostly Christians, have had trouble with Muslim Turks for more than 500 years. In 1453, Ottoman emperor Sultan Mehmed II forced all non-Muslims to live in “millets”—autonomous, theocratic enclaves. The millets were supposed to lessen friction between the two cultures. They did not. As the empire began to disintegrate during the 19th century, hostility between Muslims and Armenians escalated. Massacres took place in 1869, 1876, and 1878.

When Armenians launched their own revolutionary parties, the Hēnchak in 1887 and the Dashnak in 1890, the Ottomans reacted by massacring another 250,000 Armenians in 1895–96. The Turks embarked on all-out genocide in 1915, citing wartime Armenian complicity with the invading Russians as the cause. Papazian finds such an explanation wanting. The Turks could have simply imprisoned any suspected traitors and meted out justice to the guilty.

Papazian believes that the spectacular 1973 Los Angeles killing has spurred much of the recent violence. Moreover, he contends that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has lent a helping hand, having trained Armenian gunmen in its Mideast camps; the PLO may even have supplied arms and money for terrorist activities. In fact, he adds, the level of Armenian terrorism has almost directly paralleled the rise and (present) fall of the Palestinian terrorists in the international arena.