

KARL MANNHEIM AND THE MASS SOCIETY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies
University of Manitoba

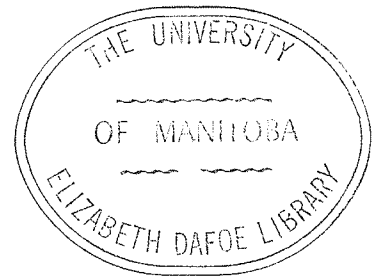


In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Martin Levin
September, 1963

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The purpose of this thesis is to present in an accurate and as comprehensive form as possible Karl Mannheim's writings on the mass society. Within the general framework of this analysis, Mannheim's work on the social antecedents of knowledge is also included.

Because all of Mannheim's writings (with the possible exception of his last work) were in the form of separate essays or articles, it was difficult to integrate and coordinate them. A turgid style of exposition proved to be an additional handicap.

Mannheim's first scholarly efforts were devoted to the field of epistemology. In a number of separate studies, he attempted to demonstrate the influence that social factors and historical position exert upon the origin and content of intellectual thought. This study of the "existential determination of knowledge" eventually developed into a branch of sociology known as the "sociology of knowledge" and Mannheim became its most influential exponent.

However, the collapse of democracy in many European countries in the twenties and thirties of this century and the trend towards the totalitarian organization of society had a tremendous impact on Mannheim. The effect of this traumatic experience was to direct his attention away from the comparatively rarified atmosphere of epistemology to the pressing problem

of diagnosing the rise of a new barbarism and the descent into totalitarianism.

The thesis outlines the four hypotheses advanced by Mannheim to characterize the salient features of our age. The dissolution of organic medieval society, Mannheim believed, had resulted in the break-up of fixed forms and traditional ties. The consequent social mobility and spiritual uprootedness left a great vacuum. In addition, the mechanization of life, the pressures of the mass on elites, and the revolution in social techniques have produced a completely unprecedented situation. Under the impact of these events, the secular religion of totalitarianism has risen to prominence and power.

Committed to the preservation of the integrity and freedom of the individual, Mannheim found this trend abhorrent. Believing that capitalism was hopeless and doomed to rapid extinction, Mannheim was pledged to war on two fronts--against laissez-faire liberalism and against totalitarianism. The weapon in this war was sociology which would provide a valid set of bearings and a new system of values for an uprooted humanity. In fact, Mannheim believed that only the sociologist could play the part of the good physician, supplying a correct diagnosis and prescribing efficacious remedies. Hence, Mannheim advocated a reassessment of our attitudes to such problems as social order and consensus, education, work and leisure, religion, etc. All are related to the reconciliation

of freedom with organization in order that we may better "plan for freedom".

Whether Mannheim's planning would only result in a more subtle social science manipulation of men's lives or whether it would truly provide a guarantee of our cherished freedoms has been a subject of much controversy and is dealt with in this thesis. However, the radical rethinking, undertaken by Mannheim, of the most fundamental issues confronting man was long overdue. The magnitude of his efforts and the genuineness of his compassion was phenomenal and places Mannheim squarely within the Western tradition of intolerance of evil and belief in the ultimate dignity and worth of man.

PREFACE

Any contemporary work on politics or society one might refer to today is likely to contain reference to the "mass society". Probably no term has been employed to describe such a variety of phenomena. Invariably, however, it is used in a pejorative sense to characterize an alleged degeneration of culture, a tightening circumscription of freedom. Certainly, there is ample evidence today to justify such an assumption.

The subject of this thesis, Karl Mannheim, lived in a world shattered by two world wars and countless revolutions. Hence, the fact that his writings are haunted by a sense of social disorder and crisis is hardly surprising. The phenomenal response he obtained during his sojourn in England is, perhaps, less understandable. Probably, the climate of uncertainty and upheaval that characterized much of the inter-war period goes far in accounting for the popularity of Mannheim's attempt to penetrate the inmost layer of man.

The "affluent society" and the dismal failure of the Communist experiment explain the less ambitious attempts of reformers today who wish to improve upon the "human predicament". However, to limit one's ambitions means to scale-down one's hopes. The dream of achieving heaven on earth, which has animated thinkers for thousands of years, has crumbled or become a nightmare.

The "Brave New World", to nationalize or not to nationalize, are not the real issues which confront us. To make man paramount, to reduce his creation, the social world, to human dimensions constitutes the fundamental problem. The efforts of Karl Mannheim represent an uncompromising (albeit not always successful) attempt to solve the human conundrum. It was with this in mind that this thesis was written.

I am indebted to Professor M. S. Donnelly for the lucid and perceptive advice he provided during the preparation of this thesis. His helpful comments were of valuable assistance.

I wish also to acknowledge my debt to Professor C. R. Hiscocks, from whom, for the first time, I learnt to appreciate the intricacies involved in the preparation of scholarly work.

My thanks also to Miss Margaret Mackenzie, head of the Reference Library, for her patience and effort in obtaining sources.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to my wife who undertook the traumatic experience of marriage while I was working on this thesis.

Martin Levin,
Winnipeg,
September, 1963.

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CHAPTER I

THE EMERGENCE OF THE MASS SOCIETY

No man is an island unto himself.--John Donne

The perennial problem confronting man since time immemorial, has been the adjustment of the claims of the individual versus the demands of society and its governing bodies. The compromises worked out have varied from age to age and often have changed within the lifespan of a single generation. However, man's awareness of himself as an entity separate from his social environment is of comparatively recent origin. Except for the brief glory of Greek civilization, most of man's long history has been characterized by a close identification with his social world. In this static milieu, man lacked freedom, although these bonds did give him the security of an ascribed status and tradition. As Fromm has pointed out, these bonds were "the ties that connect the child with its mother, the member of a primitive community with his clan and nature, or the medieval man with the Church and social caste."¹

¹Erich Fromm, Escape from Freedom (New York: Rinehart & Company Inc., 1941), p. 25.

In the medieval scheme of things, man had a defined and unchangeable niche in the social world from the moment of his birth. The patriarchal family, the guild, the church, the feudal class and the village community were the institutional continuities and moral certainties of medieval society. The small social group with its corporate solidarity was the pre-eminent fact of the individual's life. Jacob Burckhardt, the great Swiss historian, gave classical expression to this in his description of medieval culture:

In the Middle Ages both sides of human consciousness --that which was turned within as that which was turned without-- lay dreaming, or half awake beneath a common veil. The veil was woven of faith, illusion, and childish prepossession, through which the world and history were seen clad in strange hues. Man was conscious of himself only as member of a race, people, party, family², or corporation--only through some general catagory.

The integrated network of associations that lay intermediate to the individual and the State provided social membership and clear belief for the man of the Middle Ages.

The progressive destruction of the medieval social structure and the emergence of the modern individual began with the Renaissance which witnessed the rise of a wealthy and individualistic upper class largely emancipated from the traditional feudal ties. The masses, at the base of the pyramid, were also shaken by the fissures opening up in the hitherto immobile social structure of medieval feudal society. As

² Jacob Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 143.

early as 1231, as Burckhardt points out, Frederick II's political measures were "aimed at the complete destruction of the feudal State, at the transformation of the people into a multitude destitute of will and of the means of resistance, but profitable in the utmost degree to the exchequer."³ The masses lost the security of their former status and the uprooted individual became the common component of the new masses to be manipulated and exploited by those in power.

The rise of Protestantism in the sixteenth century challenged the ideological supremacy of the one institution that encompassed and integrated the whole medieval world. The concept that man might be saved by faith alone explicitly attacked and undermined the medieval Catholic concept of religion as being essentially an affair of hierarchical organization, sacrament, and liturgy. For Luther and Calvin, the aim of purifying the Church entailed divorcing religion from its external trappings and restricting its sphere to questions of individual faith, and transferring to other institutions, particularly the State, secular responsibilities. The attack upon religious corporatism and the drive towards individualism became the most salient characteristic of the Reformation.

The third great force responsible for modern leveling of cultures and the automization of traditional communities is the rise of the capitalist economy. Having essentially the

³ Ibid., p. 24.

same effect, capitalist enterprise and Protestant individualism both tended to liberate the individual from the dead hand of tradition and destroy the corporate view of man. Nisbet summed up the process this way:

As Protestantism sought to reassimilate men in the invisible community of God, capitalism sought to reassimilate them in the impersonal and rational framework of the free market. As in Protestantism, the individual, rather than the group, becomes the central unit. But instead of pure faith, individual profit becomes the mainspring of activity. In both spheres there is a manifest decline of custom and tradition and a general disengagement of purpose from the contexts of community.⁴

The decline of medieval society with its emphasis on tradition and the supremacy of the social group was not an undisguised blessing. The emancipation of man from the confines and restrictions of medieval life did certainly result in greater freedom and social mobility for the individual and great strides were made in the advancement of man's knowledge. On the other hand, the security of settled habits and the stability of a static hierarchical society were lost and the result was uprooted man. But in the hedonistic calculus of modern political theorists, the immensity of that cost was not readily apparent. As far as they were concerned, the all-

⁴ R.A. Nisbet, Community and Power (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 94. The bulk of this chapter is taken up with the relationship of the individual to intermediate social groups and to the State. It is well, at this point, to acknowledge my debt to Nisbet whose book dealing with these matters greatly enhanced my insight into this problem.

important problem was to liberate the intellectual and economic forces as rapidly and as thoroughly as possible, from the restraining influence of traditional institutions. So uninhibited an attack on vested rights inevitably involved a radical assertion of the power of the sovereign State and the theory of sovereignty became, "the ideological weapon of those who sought to rationalize the life of society in the face of ecclesiastical, feudal and other traditional forces of resistance...."⁵ The confident belief of the age was that once the obsolete and anachronistic forces of the traditional order had been dissolved by the omnipotent power of reason, all problems of social existence would be spontaneously resolved. The need for a certain stability derived from traditions and conventions was overlooked in the exultation of reason and the intoxication with progress.

With the partial exception of Bodin (who still had one foot in the Middle Ages) and of Burke (who attempted to stem the tide) and the rise of socialism, the outstanding Western philosophers since medieval times conceived of society as a collection of self-contained and self-sustaining individuals. Believing that the sovereign State was the only form of social organization necessary for the protection or realization of the individual, they disapproved strongly of all private

⁵ F. Watkins, The Political Tradition of the West (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 152.

associations which represented group interests. The end result of this extremely individualistic tradition could only be the loss of a sense of communal belonging and of secure moral status and the emergence of the undifferentiated, amorphous mass.

The whole sequence of events which have up to now, only been described in abstract terms, can be traced in the development of political theory since the Middle Ages. In the writings of Bodin, Hobbes, Rousseau, and in the philosophy of laissez-faire, two complementary themes were developed: one, the progressive emergence of the rational, autonomous individual from the ancient confines of patriarchal kinship, class, guild and village community; and two, the successive extrication of the State from the fetters of the medieval group. The reaction to this one-sided emphasis can be seen in Burke's defence of tradition-bearing groups in an organic society, and in the rise of modern socialism. In an age of sudden change and dislocation, such as ours, the quest for community has become man's urgent preoccupation.

In the curiously ambivalent attitude to the medieval society and to the State, in Jean Bodin's writings, his position in marking a transition from medieval to modern thought is clearly illuminated. Bodin was one of a group of men, calling themselves the Politiques, who emphatically believed in the necessity of a strong government--one that could effectively counter the divisive tendencies in the body politic.

Bodin was the best known of these theorists, for he gave the clearest expression and most convincing rationalization of the necessity for the supremacy of State power over every other associative relationship.

Bodin defined sovereignty--he was the first to employ the term--as "supreme power over citizens and subjects, unrestrained by law." This absolute and perpetual power belonged to the monarch. His power was inalienable, limited neither by custom nor by law. Bodin saw more clearly than anyone before him that the essence of sovereignty consists in the making of general laws. For the France of the sixteenth century this attribute of sovereignty could be translated into reality only by declaring all powers, all customs and all persons to be subject to the will of the monarch. The feudal system of diffusion and decentralization was to give way to an authority that was one and indivisible. The political community was foremost, taking precedence over religious differences or the survival of local, customary, and class immunities. In Bodin's assertion of the primacy of the political, his view of society possessed distinctly modern implications.

But there was another side to Bodin's theory that places him in direct line of descent of the social philosophers of earlier centuries. In his appreciation of the moral and social qualities of intermediate associations, we find a trend of social thought not present again in the discussion of political philosophers until the time of Burke.

The social groups in medieval society, Bodin felt, were indispensable agencies of solidarity and control. His devotion to the institutions of the monarchy did not blind him to the historical and moral properties of the society in which he lived. But of all forms of associative life it was the family that Bodin most venerated. His belief in the family as an independently existing unit out of which the State is constructed, clearly relates him to medieval social thought. While ostensibly sovereignty is to be absolute, imprescriptible, and perpetual, Bodin insisted that it ends where the institution of the family and its customs and property begins.

Logically, however, Bodin's theory of sovereignty breaks down before the irreconcilability of these two absolutes. For how could the indefeasible rights of the family be reconciled with the unlimited power of the sovereign? These two conflicting, unresolved strands of thought were solved very simply by those who came after Bodin, and the method of their solution is reflected in the theory of Thomas Hobbes.

Hobbes' Leviathan appeared only seventy-five years after the publication of Bodin's great work. Yet the difference between the approach and objectives of these two men must be measured in terms of centuries. While both Bodin and Hobbes took their theoretical departure from the problem of order and the necessity for a strong centralized authority, the medieval image of society that was an integral part of

Bodin's philosophy, found no place in Hobbes' constructions. Neither the family, the corporation, nor any other system of authority was allowed by Hobbes to intervene between the individual and the absolute power of the State. In an age which saw the wreck of so many of the traditional associations and institutions of economic and religious life, Hobbes' uncompromising individualism was a natural reaction, and it was this that constituted the most revolutionary aspect of his philosophy.

In the seventeenth century, thinkers were enamoured as seldom before with the power of human reason. Hence all relationships which were based merely on loyalty, reverence or tradition could no longer be tolerated. Only that which could be justified by clear-headed and cold-hearted reason could remain. Like other seventeenth century thinkers, Hobbes posited a pre-political state of nature in which man was isolated and free. The problem that had to be resolved was how did he emerge from this social vacuum. Some form of contract was invariably the answer:

Contract, conceived as free agreement among self-interested individuals, became the seventeenth century rationalist's prime response to problems of social cohesion that had commonly been answered in terms of Christian morality or historically derived status by medieval philosophers.⁶

Society in the eyes of the seventeenth century theorists was

⁶ Nesbit, op. cit., p. 131.

merely a loose collection of discrete individuals. For Hobbes there was no middle ground between man as a helpless, isolated and fear-ridden creature and man as citizen of the absolute State. Hence the creation of the Leviathan and its reinforcement assumed central importance to his system. The necessity of making the State's power absolute stemmed from the absoluteness of the original contract which created the State in the first place. Moreover Hobbes denied that any form of social order could exist apart from the sovereign structure of the State.

Hobbes marked a clear advance over Bodin in the construction of the absolute State. While Bodin believed that the State reinforced order, he never would have suggested that it created it. For he always recognized the part played by kinship, religion and other associations in socializing man. Hobbes, however, had little sympathy for any associations and groups other than the State. For they threatened the monolithic unity of the sovereign power.

Actually, Hobbes concern for the absolute power of the State was the necessary complement of his individualism. For without the check of a neutral supreme authority, man in his natural pursuit of private interests would sink once again to the dismal condition of fear and brutishness that had characterized his beginnings. Hence the State was instituted as the servant of private security. Its utility lay in its ability

to create an environment for the individual's pursuit of his natural ends. There was no general or public good; only individuals, who required peace and security in order to pursue rationally their proper interests. In this argument, Hobbes delineated a picture of society that was to animate social thinking for at least two centuries more. This spirit became known as *laissez-faire*.

The Hobbesian community was merely an aggregate of individuals, each free to pursue his own self-interest. Its unity was derived solely from the unified will of the sovereign. Western political theory had to wait until Rousseau to join what Hobbes had separated. For Rousseau revived the older notion of a community (harking back to Plato) as a corporate fellowship and endowed it with the unity of will associated with the Hobbesian sovereign. In Hobbes, the people set up a sovereign and transferred all power to him. Rousseau's sovereign, however, was the people, constituted as a political community through the social contract.

Rousseau's preoccupation with the problem of community stemmed from his hatred of contemporary society and its attendant tyrannies and uncertainties. He soon found in the absolute State the instrument for the emancipation of the individual from the chains of a corrupting society. Rousseau's concern for the independence of the individual from his fellow members of society led him to idealize the function of the State. No statement of Rousseau's better illustrates this than

the following:

Each citizen would then be completely independent of all his fellow men, and absolutely dependent upon the State: which operation is always brought by the same means; for it is only by the force of the State that the liberty of its members can be secured. ⁷

The State becomes, in Rousseau's philosophy, a moral agent. It demands the unqualified obedience of every individual in the community for it represents the General Will, which for Rousseau, was an abstract entity that he clearly distinguished from the will of all. As Rousseau asserted over and over again, the General Will is always right for it stands for the social good, which is itself the standard of right. The State as the embodiment of this will, and the agency by which it is realized, must be absolute. The existence of other associations and groups in the body politic must be sharply restricted as being divisive and distractive. There was to be no bond of loyalty, no social affiliation, to interfere in the realization of the General Will. Society in this view, was an aggregate of atoms held together by the sovereign will of the State, while freedom consisted in the subordination of the individual to the whole of the State. If this was not forthcoming, coercion must be applied; but this merely meant, in Rousseau's felicitous phrase, that the individual "will be forced to be free." By accepting the power of the

⁷ Quoted in Nesbit, op. cit., p. 143.

State, one was but participating in the General Will, thereby realizing the general good. The individual, by renouncing the loyalties of traditional society and surrendering the right of association to the State, became free. For only with the aid of the omnipotent State could man be emancipated from the entanglements of feudal customs and partial allegiances.

This affinity between atomistic individualism and the omnipotent, benign State, was demonstrated by the French Revolution whose objective was the destruction of the Old Regime and the liberation of the individual from the tyranny of old institutions and social groups. Revolutionary legislators attacked the Church, the class system, the outdated provinces--everything that stood in the way of the breaking down of collectivities into the individuals who composed them. The creation of masses of legally autonomous individuals inevitably involved the augmentation of State power.

This destruction of all other relationships and statuses in society, other than man's membership in the political order, aroused in Burke, the founder of political conservatism, an invincible hatred of the Revolution. He saw in the Reign of Terror the inevitable culmination of ideas contained in the rationalistic individualism of the Enlightenment. In destroying the traditional associations of the Old Regime--the guilds, the patriarchal family, class, religious association, Burke argued the Revolution had opened the flood gates which would,

in time, submerge the whole moral order of Europe. Tradition-bearing groups rather than isolated individuals were the only guarantee of steady progress.

In his attack upon the revolutionists' glorification of reason, Burke pointed out that communities are held together not by calculating self-interest, but by a sense of membership and duty, hallowed by long tradition and immemorial custom. The abstract individual and impersonal relations of contract were declared by him to be a hoax. Only within the contexts of community could order and integration be maintained. The individuals could find status and the indispensable supports of belief only within the corporate structure of society. Without such a stable union, disorganization and insecurity were the inevitable result.

Unfortunately for Burke, the rise of the middle class and the enshrinement of technological progress as embodied in the free competitive market, inexorably undermined the organic society and its traditional bases of social life, that he so eloquently venerated.

For while the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century wrought an unprecedented improvement in the methods of production, it brought about a catastrophic dislocation of the lives of the common people. The rise to power of the middle class and triumph of laissez-faire was the logical culmination of the philosophy of the Enlightenment. The rationalist's concept of a society based on calculating

individualism was reflected in the capitalist's faith in the automatic working of the free market. The supposition was that society's well-being was best served by allowing the individual complete moral and social autonomy. Progress was held to be self-perpetuating and harmonious. The basic problems of organization in society, according to this rationalistic self-confidence, would spontaneously solve themselves. Hence there was a complete readiness to accept the social consequences of economic improvements, whatever they may be, even though this implied the wholesale destruction of the traditional fabric of society and the creation of atomized masses of insecure individuals.

Yet simultaneously a countermovement was on foot. While Burke was preoccupied with the preservation of the traditional corporate solidarity of society, those who shared his concern for community in the following century, were obsessed with the efficacy of organization; for the problem confronting them was not one of conserving what had existed, but creating that which had been destroyed.

Society had been subjected to the corrosive forces of rapid technological changes and social mobility. The resultant social disorganization and personal demoralization produced a sense of alienation and bewilderment that became obvious to all those possessed of a social conscience.

Hence in the nineteenth century there arose a tradition of discourse preoccupied with the revival of social solidarity.

Possibly, the first coherent approach to the problem was that taken by the Utopian Socialists. Eccentric and much-maligned, men such as Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen possessed in common a radical disenchantment from a society which left in its trail uprooted populations, economically deprived and morally depraved. Consciously or sub-consciously they betrayed a nostalgia for the vanished warmth of the simple community. The radical reorganization of existing society, they felt, was both necessary and inevitable. All were staunch upholders of the efficacy of planning and organization. By appealing to man's reason and good will, they believed the millenium would be realized. By their original intellectual efforts, the Utopian Socialists attempted to restore to the exaggerated individualism of Western man a recognition of humanity's need for social cohesion and belonging.

It was this tendency of liberal rationalism to dissolve social ties, reducing society to a mass of isolated individuals, that also inspired Marx's hatred of bourgeois society. All natural relationships, Marx declared, had been dissolved into money relationships. Private ownership had enslaved the worker and reduced him to a brutalized condition. This atomization or mechanization of primary relationships, Marx attributed to the revolutionary influence of the bourgeoisie.

The crucial theme, in the writings surveyed above, is the destruction of our medieval heritage, and the place of the individual in this new, highly mobile society. The dissolution

of the fabric of communal ties created individuals, rendered homeless by the inexorable progress of social atomization. Such a society was most clearly foreshadowed and found its greatest advocates in the writings of Bodin, Hobbes, Rousseau and in nineteenth century liberal philosophy, while the reaction to these developments largely stemmed from anxieties provoked by the emergence of the mass. Burke's glorification of tradition and his hatred of abstract reason arose from a fear of what the absence of one and the presence of the other would entail for the fate of the individual. The rise of socialism was the result of the emergence of uprooted and insecure masses at the mercy of the blind workings of the automatic market.

The concept of the homogenized mass society has now come to the fore to preoccupy contemporary social thought. To aristocratic thinkers, the mass represents the dreaded enemy of culture. To the democrat, the mass is the helpless prey to forces outside itself; while to totalitarian strategists, the existence of the mass is the essential ingredient of revolutionary opportunity. We have reached the point where, today, the choice held out for man is often between two dismal extremes: a chaotic agglomeration of isolated individuals on the one hand, or a totally regimented society on the other.

The three formulations cited above, all agree that basic to the formation of the masses was the atomization of all social

and cultural relationships within which human beings gained their normal sense of membership in society; and although there are a wide variety of definitions of the "masses", the following one describes fairly well what most writers have in mind: "When the normal inhibitions enforced by tradition and social structure are loosened...the undifferentiated mass emerges." ⁸ The breakdown of the old order and the absence of a new one has created insecure, lonely and despairing individuals devoid of ties of affection or loyalty. To paraphrase the famous words of Karl Marx, a spectre is haunting modern political and social theory: it is the emergence of the masses. In this world, and confronted with this phenomenon, Karl Mannheim grew to maturity.

⁸ Philip Selznick, The Organizational Weapon (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1952), p. 283.

CHAPTER II

THE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF KARL MANNHEIM

The philosophers hitherto have only interpreted the world in various ways: the thing is, however, to change it.--Karl Marx

Karl Mannheim was born in Hungary in 1893, the only surviving child of Jewish middle class parents. He spent his childhood in Budapest, his birthplace, and graduated from a humanistic high school there. After a few semesters at the University of Budapest, he went to the universities of Freiburg and Heidelberg and spent a short period of study in Paris.

Mannheim's formative years, which were mostly spent in Hungary and Germany, were years of social and intellectual upheaval. The chaos of World War I and the revolution and counter-revolution immediately following was a time of bitter disillusionment and extravagant hope. For the generation of the First World War it was a period of great intellectual ferment. Old myths were shattered and new theories competed to take their place. Mannheim, naturally, was deeply involved in this intellectual, spiritual and moral re-orientation.

At the time of Mannheim's youth it was taken for granted in the Central European countries and in Russia that

Jewish intellectuals could only be socialists and in Central Europe that meant to be Marxist. Thus Mannheim moved in the group of Hungarian socialists of whom George Lukacs was the most outstanding member. Although he transcended Marxism's most dogmatic aspects in his research, Mannheim never gave up the basis of economic and social variables in his theory of historicism. Lukacs, in particular, showed Mannheim that it was possible to make refined sociological analyses of literature from the Marxian position, thereby contributing greatly to Mannheim's later studies in the sociology of knowledge.

But Marxism was not the only intellectual current which at that time claimed absolute knowledge for itself. There were the purely theoretical movements, which were largely restricted to academic circles, and which proposed to replace the meaningless intellectual traditions of the past with novel insights of a more substantial nature.

The neo-Kantians (Dilthey, Rickert, Troeltsch, and above all Max Weber) exercised a decisive influence on Mannheim's intellectual development. This school represented a reaction to the attempt to analyze human, cultural and intellectual phenomena in the same logical terms one dealt with in the physical sciences. Nothing that was as devoid of life and as sterile as a physical law, it was felt, could do justice to the individuality of man and the uniqueness of the human act in history. The focus of analysis in this synthetic

method of studying history was the inclusive whole, which, it was postulated, was prior to its parts. The real task therefore became one of reconstructing the historical configurations of a given period in a sympathetic and evocative way. As Kecskemeti, his editor, commented:

Mannheim responded strongly to the new 'synthetic' trend; a radical contrast between the 'static' concepts of natural science and mathematics on the one hand and the 'dynamic' concepts of historic and social sciences on the other became one of the essential features of his thinking.¹

This new synthetic method of studying history had several ramifications. For if the historian is to truly establish a genuine communion with history, he has to

divest himself of the concepts, value standards, and categories characteristic of his own age, and to learn to substitute for them the corresponding concepts, value standards, and categories of the period under examination. This whole procedure presupposed, if one analyzed it from a philosophical viewpoint, that no standards and concepts had timeless validity.²

In other words to sympathize is not sufficient; one must empathize. This belief that every Weltanschauung is historically determined and therefore both limited and relative became the decisive germ which was later to develop into

¹ Karl Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge ed. Paul Kecskemeti (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1952), p. 5. It contains six essays written and published in German scientific journals between 1923 and 1929. It shall henceforth be cited as "Sociology of Knowledge".

² Ibid.

Mannheim's total historicism which, in turn, interpreted "every segment of the spiritual-intellectual world as in a state of flux and growth."³ Mannheim's whole conception of reality was closely related to those interpretations of the social process which have been philosophically postulated by Hegel and sociologically reinterpreted by Marx.

Mannheim's own development was the outcome of a confluence of historicism and Marxism. The idea of "existentially determined" knowledge which can be traced back to Marxism and the doctrine of the "Perspectivist" nature of knowledge which originates in historicism were fused together to form the basis of Mannheim's controversial sociology of knowledge.

Some of the seminal ideas around which Mannheim developed his sociological theory of knowledge can be found in his doctoral thesis, the Structural Analysis of Epistemology, which he completed in 1922. His articles and essays throughout the twenties show a growing preoccupation with this theme.⁴

Soon after graduating, Mannheim married Juliska Lang of Budapest, a psychologist and fellow student at Budapest and Heidelberg. Her psychological interests were influential in Mannheim's subsequent development. In 1925 he

³ Ibid., p. 86.

⁴ Some of the titles of this period give ample illustration of Mannheim's trend of interest up to 1929: "On the Interpretation of Weltanschauung", 1923; "Historicism", 1924; "The Problem of a Sociology of Knowledge", 1925; "The Problem of Generation", 1927; "Conservative Thought", 1927; "Competition as a Cultural Phenomenon", 1929.

was appointed to a lectureship at the University of Heidelberg. Mannheim's most significant German publication of this period was Ideology and Utopia.⁵ In this work, Mannheim presented his fully matured theory on the sociology of knowledge. The book enjoyed a tremendous success with progressive groups, but was severely criticized by many who felt that its radical relativism was destructive of all convictions and values without offering anything to take their place. In any case, publication of the book brought Mannheim the offer of the only full professorship of sociology in Germany at the University of Frankfurt.

Just as Freud had uncovered the individual unconscious in his theory of "rationalizations" and Marx had exposed the social unconscious in his concept of "false consciousness", so Mannheim aimed at piercing through outmoded ways of thought which inadequately grasped the whole reality.

The intellectual antecedents of the sociology of knowledge can be traced back to the theory of ideology. However the Marxist ideological analysis was above all a weapon of polemics directed against the adversary. It was employed to illuminate the distorted view of reality propagated by the dominant groups in society. To unmask these hidden interests, by showing why they were linked to certain groups was the aim

⁵ It was originally published in German as Ideologie und Utopie in Bonn in 1929. It was enlarged by Mannheim and translated into English by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils and published by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner in London in 1936. Henceforth quoted as "Ideology".

of ideological analysis. Controversy on the plane of ideas, therefore, yielded to laying bare the interests those ideas concealed.

Mannheim, however, distinguished two meanings for the term ideology: the particular conception and the total conception of ideology. In both conceptions, ideas were not taken at their own worth, but were interpreted in the light of the position of the one who expressed them. However in the special formulation, only our adversaries thought was regarded as wholly a function of their social position; in the general, the thought of all groups, our own included, was so regarded.

As Mannheim succinctly put it:

With the emergence of the general formulation of the total **conception** of ideology, the simple theory of ideology develops into the sociology of knowledge. What was once the intellectual ornament of a party is transformed into a method of research in social and intellectual history generally. ⁶

Mannheim's conception of knowledge was, therefore, closely akin to that of Marx's. For both men, knowledge emerged out of the social process in the struggle of social groups for self-assertion and political survival. However, Mannheim rejected the proletarian class consciousness' claim to possess a monopoly on true knowledge. Each historical standpoint

⁶ Ideology, p. 69.

contained some truth: "There is an existentially determined truth content in human thought at every stage of its development."⁷ Hence while Marx implicitly contrasted genuine knowledge with illusion, Mannheim propounded the view that each historical period had its own style of thought and that all styles of thought attained a partial or "perspectivist" knowledge of reality. Mannheim's purpose was not to impeach the validity of socio-historically determined knowledge; instead he simply argued that such knowledge should not be evaluated on the basis of some absolute standard. To avoid any moral connotation, Mannheim replaced the word "ideology" with that of perspective. However, this formula is extremely vague. To understand what Mannheim was talking about, a more detailed analysis will now be undertaken.

The sociology of knowledge, as Mannheim was fond of putting it, is a study of the existential determination of knowledge, that is, research into the relationship between an intellectual perspective and the social group. Maquet⁸ distinguished three essential elements in Mannheim's system: the social factor which influences thought, the mental productions which correspond to the social group, and the nature of the bond uniting them.

⁷ Sociology of Knowledge, p. 176.

⁸ Cf. Jacques J. Maquet, The Sociology of Knowledge (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1951).

Mannheim never developed an explicit theory of social stratification even though he leaned toward an acceptance of the Marxian class concept. For Mannheim it was the group, or rather the situation of the group in society and history, which determined man's outlook and philosophy. "The situation of a group in society was defined mainly in terms of political power (to be or not to be in power) and economic power (to be rich or poor)."⁹ It is the relationships of power which assumed decisive importance in Mannheim's system.

The position of the group in history was also of significance in shaping its orientation. For Mannheim, who was deeply influenced by the German historicist school, history was a metaphysical reality. In his thinking, the historic situation of a group meant the position to which it is assigned by history and from which it draws its value in regard to absolute reality. Thus he wrote: "Every theory which arises out of a class position and is based not on unstable masses but on organized historical groups must of necessity have a long-range view."¹⁰

In defining these groups, Mannheim transcended a vulgar Marxism which recognized only the social class. Any group which was self-conscious, which recognized and identified its position

⁹ Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁰ Ideology, p. 116.

in the social structure and its place in history constituted a readily identifiable community of interest with its own collective aspirations. Mannheim put it clearly: "By these groups we mean not merely classes, as a dogmatic type of Marxism would have it, but also generations, status groups, sects, occupational groups, school, etc."¹¹

However, Mannheim still adhered to the belief that the relations of production and domination in society were more basic than all the others. In other words, the economic relations obtaining in any given society and the resultant position occupied in the social hierarchy was still the ultimate determinant of one's perspective.

The question of what Mannheim meant by social groups having been clarified, the mental productions which corresponded to these groups will now be dealt with. The spheres of thought which Mannheim included in his thesis concerning the existential determination of thought were never specifically elaborated in any of his writings. His examples were primarily limited to the field of political theory. However, when he indicated what spheres of thought were socially determined, he extended their limits almost indefinitely. The only explicit exceptions he made were in mathematics and the natural sciences which, he held, were unaffected by the social or historical situation. Otherwise, he insisted that all thoughts

¹¹ Ibid., p. 248.

in the human^{istic} studies were determined in form and in content by non-theoretical factors.

With the zone of influence thus delimited, it remains to examine the precise nature of the relationship which obtained between the social group and its mental productions. Is the social or political thought of a group necessarily mechanically determined by its social or historical position? Mannheim's answer was far from simple and the expressions he employed to convey the relationship between knowledge and social structure are instructive as to his basic irresolution. They are both varied and ambiguous, indicating at least that Mannheim ruled out any question of a rigorous determinism. However, on occasion, despite his explicit denial of any such intention, Mannheim did seem to assume a direct causation of forms of thought by social forces. This assumption is reflected in Mannheim's use of the oft recurring phrase: "It is never an accident that..."¹² a given theory will derive from a given group position.

Another variation of this theme is the "focus of attention" assumption. According to this, the position of the subject in the socio-historical constellation effectively delimits his range of awareness. Only certain problems are meaningful to a limited perspective. Here thought is directed

¹² Ibid., pp. 248-49.

by the very formulation of the problem.

Elsewhere, Mannheim simply affirmed that thought was bound by the social situation in which it arises; or that "when the social situation changes, the system of norms to which it had previously given birth ceased to be in harmony with it;"¹³ or that "ideas, forms of thought and psychic energies persist and are transformed in close conjunction with social forces."¹⁴

The several terms which Mannheim employed to describe the relationship between knowledge and society were less a matter of sloppy prose than an indication of his fundamental indecision, which, by the way, Mannheim freely admitted. Hence the following:

Here we do not mean by 'determination' a mechanical cause-effect sequence: we leave the meaning of 'determination' open, and only empirical investigation will show us how strict is the correlation between life-situation and thought-process, or what scope exists for variations in the correlation.¹⁵

It seems then that we may conclude that all Mannheim was attempting to indicate was a "correspondence" of ideas to the social situation. A harmony between the two elements rather than a conditioning of the one by the other typified his position.

¹³ Ibid., p. 76.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 223.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 239.

There remains now to be considered the most disputed phase of Mannheim's writings, namely, the philosophical implications of the sociology of knowledge. For his fundamental thesis was that all thoughts (excluding the physical sciences) were determined in form and content by non-theoretical factors; that the influence of these extra-theoretical factors (the socio-existential determination of knowledge) was more than peripheral; "they are relevant not only to the genesis of ideas, but penetrate into their form and content and...furthermore, they decisively determine the scope and intensity of our experience and observation."¹⁶

The result of all this is that our knowledge is linked to a perspective. But if this is true, what validity can this knowledge have? This would seem to lead us to a radical relativism with its familiar vicious circle in which the very propositions asserting such relativism are ipso-facto invalid. Mannheim was aware of these difficulties and the intellectual nihilism implicit in such a position and in answer to them he developed a number of defensive arguments. For Mannheim was not willing to accept the position taken by those skeptical philosophers who disclaimed the possibility of a philosophical certainty in favour of a universal relativism. On the contrary, he was seriously concerned with an ultimate vindication of his theories and he made considerable efforts to show

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 240.

that his sociological system was capable of producing valid knowledge. However, his various attempts in this direction have such slender links between each other that the derivation of a systematic answer is impossible. Basically Mannheim's position can be gathered from C. Wright Mill's statement:

'True' is an adjective applied to propositions that satisfy the forms of an accepted model of verification...[but] in research we cannot fruitfully impose 'ours' [i.e., our verificatory model] upon past thinkers. There have been several models in Western thought,...and they are themselves open to social-historical relativization. 17

With Mannheim, this truth-destroying relativism takes the form of a consistent historicism.

What this doctrine asserts, [writes the editor of a collection of Mannheim's essays], is...that the subject talking about history and related topics can achieve only one kind of 'truth', that is, a communion with, and participation in, the real trends and forces of history. To be out of touch with the basic trend is to miss the truth; identification with the basic trend will guarantee true knowledge.... [For Mannheim], 'truth' is first and foremost an attribute of existence and only secondarily of of discourse. One is or is not in the Truth; and one's possession of Truth depends on being in communion with a reality which 'is' or embodies truth. 18

Ascertaining the truth for Mannheim was not the grasping of an eternal verity "but a creative concretization flowing from historically unique constellations."¹⁹

17 C. Wright Mills, Power, Politics and People (New York: Ballantine Books Inc., 1962), p. 463.

18 Sociology of Knowledge, p. 15.

19 Ibid., p. 165.

Even the very idea of truth, Mannheim asserted, is subject to historical and geographical variations. Not only do different societies entertain different convictions as to what is true, they differ even as to the meaning of the word truth itself. "The concept of truth," Mannheim wrote, "has not remained constant through all time, but has been involved in the process of historical change."²⁰

The very principles, in the light of which knowledge is to be criticized, are themselves found to be socially and historically conditioned. Hence their application appears to be limited to given historical periods and the particular type of knowledge then prevalent.²¹

Given this relativistic framework, Mannheim still felt that it was both necessary and possible to establish generally valid knowledge.

In this attempt Mannheim introduced several dynamic criteria of the validity of historical judgments. For Mannheim, the relevant question was whether ideas enable man to act harmoniously in his society. Both ideologies and utopias fail to meet social reality adequately: the former because they are behind, the latter because they are ahead of the times.²² Only that thought which is fully adjusted to the times can be classified as realistic. Truth means essentially

²⁰ Ideology, p. 262.

²¹ Ibid., p. 259.

²² Mannheim's distinction between ideology and utopia is strongly reminiscent of Marx's contrast between bourgeois ideology and proletarian science.

adjustedness to social life, that is, adjusted^{ment}~~ness~~ without either revolutionary or reactionary tendencies. This key conviction is amply illustrated by the following quotation:

Accordingly, from our point of view, an ethical attitude is invalid if it is oriented with reference to norms, with which action in a given historical setting, even with the best of intentions, cannot comply.... A theory then is wrong if in a given practical situation it uses concepts and categories which, if taken seriously, would prevent man from adjusting himself at that historical stage. ²³

Truth is that which permits the best adaptation to a situation. According to this criterion of efficiency, a conception would be valid if it gave the fascists the conviction that their action would succeed and discouraged resistance of their adversaries. Mannheim, recognizing the dubious values of this criterion, moderated his view considerably in another attempt to circumvent a radical relativism.

According to Mannheim, socio-historical reality is in a state of constant flux and becoming. This historicist position led him into norm destroying, self-corroding relativism. But it also brought him to the dubious construction of the "socially-unattached intelligentsia" which is allegedly able to rise above the unavoidable chaos of diverse standpoints. Holding that thought is connected with and dependent on the social position of its proponents, Mannheim had to search for a social position within the class structure of a stratified society from which it would be possible to view the multiplicity of

²³ Ibid., p. 84.

thought systems with sufficient detachment to evaluate them properly. The means by which this was to be accomplished is that of a "dynamic synthesis", that is, a series of syntheses linked to each other, each one arriving at a broader perspective than the preceding syntheses. "In a realm in which everything is in the process of becoming, the only adequate synthesis would be a dynamic one, which is reformulated from time to time."²⁴ Moreover, Mannheim hinted at a certain progress²⁵ "towards an absolute synthesis in the utopian sense." In this there is revealed another influence of historicism and ultimately of Hegel's philosophy: the notion of the progressive revelation of reason in history. The only group from which we can expect such a progressive synthesis, according to Mannheim, will be one which is not too firmly situated in the social order. Hence Mannheim placed his hope on the "socially-unattached intelligentsia".

There are, Mannheim recognized, two courses of action open to the unattached intellectuals:

First,...a largely voluntary affiliation with one or the other of the various antagonistic classes; second, scrutiny of their own social moorings and the quest for the fulfilment of their mission as the predestined advocate of the intellectual interests of the whole.²⁶

Mannheim was aware, of course, that most intellectuals are socially attached and render services to the big classes.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 135. ²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 140.

However, even when they are attached to political parties, they can manage to arrive at a universal understanding of the society which they try to influence from a particular standpoint. Along with these intellectuals who are "engaged", others try to realize the social detachment possible for the intelligentsia --and the mission implicit in it--by attempting to transcend particular points of view with a more comprehensive perspective that will permit a dynamic synthesis.

However, one cannot help but note that if all knowledge is true only for a perspective, then unanimity itself will make no difference. A perspective which synthesizes other perspectives merely multiplies the alternatives. The truth cannot be a synthesis of lies.

Mannheim's picture of the role of the intellectual is strongly akin to the mission which Marx assigned to the proletariat. Both are vouchsafed an outlook which permits a rounded view of the concrete historical situation which is derived from their particular position within the social structure. However, Mannheim failed to see that the intelligentsia is a class like any other, not unattached, but, like every class, attached to its specific location, world-view and set of interests.

Mannheim's conception of comprehensive syntheses and the unattached intelligentsia remain empirically unsubstantiated. Their plausibility depends entirely on the validity of

Mannheim's historicistic presuppositions, which are hardly acceptable to social researchers who believe that the interpretation of social processes must be based on established observational methods.

However, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge had important ramifications for his later theory on the reconstruction of society. For the social conditioning of knowledge implies that by changing certain factors of the social structure, one can directly influence human activity. Hence Mannheim's later interest in social as opposed to moral reform.

On a more obvious level, Mannheim expected that his system of sociology of knowledge would have a pacifying effect on the divisive conflicts which plague contemporary society. By becoming conscious of the social origin of our thoughts, we progress from the realm of unconscious motivation to that of control. By dominating what formerly dominated us, we can increase the possibility of greater freedom and responsibility. Moreover, what is ostensibly a conflict of ideas can often be reduced to a conflict of interests and it is notoriously easier to arrive at an accommodation of interests than to compromise one's ideas.

The existential definition of truth involved great dangers for Mannheim which he soon came to realize and from which he extricated himself only with great difficulty. For the underlying postulate of his whole system was that history

was always progressive, positive and in a sense an all-powerful ultimate force. While this involved a sense of fatalism, it was for Mannheim an optimistic fatalism.

As Kecskemeti points out: "It is easily seen that such an attitude toward history could be maintained intact only so long as the history of our days was something one could say 'yes' to."²⁷ However, Mannheim had the misfortune to live through a period in which all historic reality simply was not acceptable to a man of his deeply humanistic beliefs. The totalitarian trends embodied by Nazism and Stalinism which were thrown up by history and were successful responses to it, were recognized by Mannheim to be profoundly negative and pernicious for man.

Hence, the problem of interpreting historic reality and adopting the historically right position assumed a new form for Mannheim...the spell of history was broken; one had to recognize that the historically dominant trend was a destructive aberration rather than a legitimate component of an intelligible, dynamic, comprehensive process.²⁸

The problem that now confronted Mannheim was how to counter-act and overcome this trend. In order to do this, it was first necessary to abandon his belief in the primacy of the historical form of reference. The necessity of extra-historical

²⁷ Karl Mannheim, Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, ed. Paul Kecskemeti (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 2. Part IV of the book, "Planned Society and the Problem of Human Personality", written and delivered in English at Oxford, in 1938, are of particular relevance in understanding Mannheim's approach to planning.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

principles to resist and correct the aberrant forces which history had brought forth now became obvious. Mannheim's faith in history, which had occupied a central place in his thinking, had to be given up. This was the position toward which Mannheim was moving when, driven from his chair in Frankfurt by the Nazis in 1933, he settled in London.

Mannheim's emigration to England in 1933 was much more than a change in physical location. The effects of psycho-analysis, existentialism and extreme historicism had touched off an intellectual unrest on the continent. The disintegration of democratic societies and the drift towards a totalitarian order produced in Mannheim, as he himself admitted, "a deep-rooted skepticism as to the vitality of democracy in our age."²⁹

However, Mannheim's experiences in England led to a slow but steady recovery of faith in democracy. The stability and cohesion of English society formed a favourable contrast to the chaotic diversity that destroyed the Weimar Republic. Mannheim discovered that spontaneous conformity was possible even in a proudly pluralistic society. In this new environment Mannheim recovered his belief in the possibility of surmounting social crises.

²⁹ Karl Mannheim, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1940), p. 5. This book appeared in a much shorter German form published in Holland in 1935 after Mannheim had left Germany. The expanded English version was published in London in 1940. Henceforth quoted as "Man and Society".

Mannheim also benefited methodologically from his sojourn in England. In a different political and social environment, Mannheim saw the merits of a more concrete, more pragmatic approach. Always ready to learn, Mannheim benefited from various new developments and emancipated himself from his former one-sidedness and extravagance. In exploring new intellectual horizons, Mannheim profited from the empirical and pragmatic Anglo-Saxon optimism with its readiness to invade reality with an active creative spirit.

The German political landslide deepened Mannheim's interests in social dynamics. His move to England restored his faith in man's ability to rationally cope with the disintegrative forces that had swept over the Continent. However, he feared that unless man responded intelligently and quickly, the drift to dictatorship was inevitable.

Mannheim came to view more and more critically laissez-faire capitalism. The frictions created by technological innovation, the social and geographical mobility of uprooted masses, divisive pressure group movements and class struggles, the dislocation and upheaval of uneven economic progress, undermine collective security and open the gates to eruption of mass-irrationality. Mannheim increasingly visualized the problem of our age as that of finding a workable solution to social life between the extremes of a planless laissez-faire democracy and the totalitarian

organization of society. Mannheim's primary objective was to educate his contemporaries into a new conception of freedom. While man remains the slave of blind social forces, the likelihood of social and personal disintegration will remain. Only by bringing under control the irrational forces which act upon our individual and collective unconscious can we enlarge and make more real our freedom, and secure democracy's future. The problems of today have grown larger and more destructive. For the older type of restrictive democracy of propertied and educated elites has increasingly given way to a democracy of emotionalized masses:

In a society in which the masses tend to dominate, irrationalities which have not been integrated into the social structure may force their way into political life. This situation is dangerous because the selective apparatus of mass democracy opens the door to irrationalities in those places where rational direction is indispensable. Thus, democracy itself produces its own antithesis and even provides its enemies with their weapons.³⁰

Against dangers of this kind, Mannheim saw but one prophylactic; an increase in human rationality expressed in a new understanding of freedom. What was needed, Mannheim became absolutely convinced, was a comprehensive science of society based on objective analysis. Mannheim felt that, unless social scientists took the initiative in analyzing society and pointing the direction in which progress was necessary, the social mechanism would be a prey to anti-

³⁰ Ibid., p. 106.

democratic and irrational fanaticisms from the extreme right and left. Obsolete ways of thinking and anachronistic conduct appropriate to the ways of another age would have to be changed. Only transition to a planned society could save us and it was the new discipline of sociology which would point the way. Imbued with the messianic attitude of the revolutionary sociologists (Comte, Marx), Mannheim looked upon sociology as the synthetic research. Its role was to assimilate the progress made in other disciplines (history, political science, economics, psychology, etc.) and to organize the results in a coherent whole. Mannheim was deeply alarmed by the dangers of the contemporary departmental approach to human affairs--alarmed by the loss of social awareness and the lack of integration in the investigation and utilization of knowledge about our social environment. Mannheim believed that it was imperative to reestablish organic cooperation between the various sciences of man.

In the past, Mannheim recognized, custom and tradition, through the vitality of group life, silently shaped man and ordered his conduct. Where conditions changed, man readjusted unconsciously. However, with the onset of industrialization and urbanization, the traditional foci of loyalty were disrupted, and man left alienated and disoriented. When the traditional forms of adaptation failed to work, the age of the



great social reformers began. Hence the early legislation on child labour and factory conditions. However, the time has now come, Mannheim asserted, for a concerted attack on the whole question:

With the present multiplication of the problems of society we have come to see that the mere cumulation of isolated reforms without coordination only creates additional disturbances, or shifts the difficulties from one sphere to another. ³¹

This is where the new discipline of sociology comes in: "Wherever, the human side of planning is uppermost, sociology provides for its needs; for sociology is that new science of society which primarily observes human conduct with reference to the social setting."³²

Ever since the collapse of the Weimar Republic Mannheim was obsessed with the question: how could the sociologist contribute to a solution of the modern social and cultural crisis. In his writings, therefore, Mannheim attempted to isolate those economic, social, political, and psychological determinants which, if correctly handled, would enable the social reformer to influence human development. Having little faith in the power of pure ideas and good will, Mannheim based his plans for social reform upon sociological insight.

³¹ Karl Mannheim, "Deomocratic Planning and the New Science of Society", This Changing World, J.R.M. Brumwell, editor (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1944), p. 79.

³² Ibid., p. 80.

Mannheim carefully distinguished his concept of planning from that of totalitarian planning. While totalitarian planning merely means the application of the old pattern of command and blind obedience to every sphere of life, democratic planning tries whenever possible to reduce central regulation in favour of decentralized decisions. Moreover, such planning is democratically controlled and is opposed to regimentation or coercion. It should also be considered, Mannheim pointed out, that "the aim of planning lends final meaning to planning methods."³³ Mannheim's conception of planning, the construction of a frame of reference for social conduct, is to provide for the fullest freedom of the individual. This is quite distinct from totalitarian planning which manipulates man and society for the benefit of an all-powerful state or abstract utopia.

Mannheim's response to the crisis of modern civilization was an extremely rationalistic one. In his view, only the integration of individual and social forces, based on rational striving and scientific insight, could create a new society. The purpose of sociology, as Mannheim understood and practised it, was to defend and strengthen the rational society. However, the recognition of forces emanating from the world of values and beliefs, convinced Mannheim that sociology simply could not afford to ignore all spiritual and

³³ Ibid., p. 81

emotional phenomena.

Over a period of years Mannheim met with a group of prominent Christian thinkers, including T.S. Eliot, J. Middleton Murry and J.H. Oldham, for periodic discussions. These meetings, Mannheim found extremely interesting and they stimulated him to a reexamination of whether the contemporary value system was adequate and generally significant enough to meet the critical needs of the day. Consequently, Mannheim interested himself in the question of whether or not Christianity might help to create values meaningful to a planned social order.

In 1933, Mannheim joined the London School of Economics and Political Science as a lecturer in sociology. After World War II broke out, he edited the International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction which he had previously founded. His appointment to the premier chair in education at the University of London in 1945 did not signify a radically new field of activity for Mannheim, who had always been pre-occupied with the business of transforming man in an organized and planned fashion. An English authority credits him with doing:

more than anyone to arouse the interest of the teaching profession here in sociological thinking, and his all too brief spell of service in the University of London already stands out as a landmark in the recent history of the training of teachers in this country. ³⁴

³⁴ A.K.C. Ottaway, Education and Society (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1953), p. viii.

Although he was asked to reorganize Canberra University in Australia according to his educational principles, he was forced to decline the offer because of ill health. A few weeks before his death he was ~~pre~~^{of}ferred the directorship of the European branch of UNESCO. He died in London on January 9th, 1947, at the age of fifty-three.

Two basic intentions governed Mannheim's whole life work. One was spiritual and dominated his earlier efforts, aiming at a penetrating understanding of the position and destiny of modern man in an age of sickeningly swift and radical change. The second was practical and triumphed in his later writings, concerning active participation in these processes of change, in order to consciously direct and rationally create man's destiny.

Mannheim's work bears the imprint of an encyclopedic mind. His greatness lay in an immense talent for synthesis. For Mannheim "was more fearful of losing sight of the forest for the trees than of losing his departmental passport by moving in unclaimed areas."³⁵

However this eclecticism exacted its price, as Mannheim was not, by any means, a systematic thinker. He displayed neither the patience nor the detachment for working out the implications of his basic tenets. His method was that of

³⁵ Ernest Mannheim, "Karl Mannheim, 1893-1947", American Journal of Sociology, LII (May, 1947), p. 473.

isolating a problem and attacking it from several aspects, with no attempt being made at logical consistency. Questions were posed, tentatively answered, partially left open and relegated to the background in favour of new ones.

Mannheim's mind was catholic in its scope and passionate in its devotion to an insecure humanity. Although never of robust health and repeatedly advised not to strain his resources, Mannheim was obsessed with the amount of work that still remained to be done if man was successfully to meet the social problems of the mid-twentieth century. From his personal acquaintance with Mannheim, John Middleton Murry has written that while, one felt Mannheim to be a heroic figure, at the same time:

One felt that he was profoundly tired, his heart as it were soaked through with the weariness of bitter disappointment; yet he was indefatigable, determined to spend himself to the uttermost, in his mission of spreading awareness of the human predicament and creating the capacity of response to its demands. ³⁶

³⁶ John Middleton Murry, Katherine Mansfield and other Literary Portraits (London: Peter Nevill Ltd., 1949), p. 152.

CHAPTER III

DIAGNOSIS

The future belongs to the masses,
or to the men who can explain things
simply to them.--Jacob Burckhardt

Born just before the turn of the century and coming to maturity during World War I and the succeeding Hungarian revolution; studying and teaching in Germany during the chaotic period of the twenties and early thirties; then forced to emigrate to England, Mannheim had ample opportunity to witness some of the most turbulent events of our age. Hence, it is hardly surprising that he eventually became obsessed by an overriding anxiety for the future of our civilization. Certainly, few have done more to illumine with thought the darkness of our time. What follows is an organized attempt to systematize into a coherent theory, Mannheim's diagnosis of the abiding problems of contemporary society. However, no attempt will be made to impose an artificial unity where none exists.

Mannheim began his analysis with a discussion of the evolution of society. When society was static or change imperceptibly slow, tradition and custom coordinated and

integrated the personality-forming institutions and valuations. Man had a sense of security which only a well-defined status can endow. Orientation in such status-bound societies was easy; everybody had a defined role and assured expectation. The world was simple, with traditional routine taking care of most economic and social problems; and where decisions had to be made, these were entrusted to a clearly delineated elite. However, with the onslaught of that whole complex of events now characterized as industrialization, urbanization and democratization, the organic community disintegrated. The intricately related, institutionally bound groupings that constituted such a society dissolved under the impact of the newly-acquired social and geographical mobility and rendered the individual homeless.¹ Progressive thinkers, at the time, felt that this was a completely desirable and much to be encouraged state of affairs--and for a certain minority, they were justified in this assumption.

The collapse of the old hierarchies and patterns of order was, for some, a potentially positive development, as it opened up the avenue to cultural and moral growth. The main objective was to liberate man from the fetters of the past that confined his thought and constrained his actions. As Mannheim pointed

¹ Cf. Chapter I for a more extensive discussion of this process and its expression in the political theories of the age.

out: "The great liberal thinkers took for granted a certain stability derived from traditions and conventions, and they placed in the foreground the anti-traditional, anti-conventional emancipatory aspects."² However, the self-sufficient rational individual proved to be an atomistic figment of the liberal imagination. The loss of traditional authority, and the corrosion of traditional value systems left the individual alone, and vulnerable to the mass stimuli which bombarded him and the irresponsible elites which manipulated him. The freedom cherished by the liberal turned out, very often, to be a nightmare. Mannheim sounded a warning, therefore, that until man escaped from the bondage of a false freedom, into a society which was consciously self-regulated, insecurity would remain our general destiny. It was this essential homelessness of man in an age of kaleidoscopic change that constituted Mannheim's besetting preoccupation.

Impatient with Marxist dogma or dogma of any kind, Mannheim was determined to discover the real origins of the crisis of Western civilization. The result was a set of hypotheses, which, Mannheim believed, characterized the salient features of contemporary society. The syndrome Mannheim delineated consisted of four aspects:

- 1) That the period of laissez-faire we are passing through,

² Karl Mannheim, Diagnosis of our Time (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. vi. Published during the war, this collection of essays excited much discussion on both sides of Atlantic. Henceforth cited as "Diagnosis".

is only a transitional phase between the dissolution of medieval society and the advent of the planned society, now in the process of formation.

2) That the over-organization of life has deprived the individual of the power to act rationally.

3) That the intervention of the mass into new areas of social life has undermined elite functions.

4) That the advances in social techniques have enabled the masses to be manipulated with, hitherto, unheard of ease.

Mannheim lived during a period of rapid and often bewildering change. The world of the laissez-faire liberal was disintegrating. The self-regulating society of small self-contained groups was expanding into a complex, highly interdependent mechanism whose parts often collided, sometimes cooperated, but which always remained unpredictable. What caused Mannheim concern was the gradual erosion of the social structure and of the forces that sustained it, without the simultaneous growth of a new order to replace it.

In the small groups of medieval society, the life of the individual was regulated according to a time-honoured pattern. The freedom which liberalism was able to maintain, according to Mannheim, was the result of an escape from the domination of local authorities. The individual, freed from control, was able to adjust himself solely to the demands of the impersonal market. However, the transition from primary groups to a

modern industrial society rendered this freedom dangerous if not illusory.

Liberalism, by juxtaposing the individual to the State, overlooked the significance and function of intermediate groups. Such institutions and groups which traditionally defined man's aspirations and his moral commitments became debilitated. This atrophy of the value-creating mechanisms ensured that society would become confused and uncertain. This breakdown of normal restraints, including internalized standards of right conduct and established channels of action, inevitably brought about social disintegration.

Forced to bear the burden of a greater amount of consciousness, man became antagonistic or bewildered. As Mannheim recognized: "Nobody can expect a human being to live in complete uncertainty and with unlimited choice. Neither the human body nor the human mind can bear endless variety."³ With the disappearance of the controls that once gave man a secure status and accepted function in society, old loyalties were rejected and cultural attenuation was the result. Man was left without orientation, and the basic consensus so necessary to the functioning of society was undermined. This state of anomie,⁴

³ Ibid., p. 29.

⁴ This term was originally coined by Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist of the second half of the nineteenth century. It refers to a situation of social emptiness or void stemming from social demoralization and personal alienation. The concept

Mannheim asserted, is the real state which people live in a mass society that took the idea of laissez-faire seriously. In the Anglo-Saxon democracies, sharing a proud history and living on a deeply ingrained religious-moral tradition, consensus is still vital enough to ensure agreement on superficial issues. However, with the first shocks of upheaval in the form of a war or economic dislocation, the population demands, what Erich Fromm has called, "escape from freedom". Then, as Mannheim stated:

The latent perplexity and moral insecurity of the little man come to the fore, and whole nations answered with the desperate cry for 'security', the demand for something to hold on to. People considered anybody who promised anything resembling security a prophet, a savior, and a leader whom they would follow blindly rather than remain in a state of utter instability and lawlessness.⁵

Such social chaos may be avoided, Mannheim conceded, as long as no major crisis occurred. However, if one accepts with Mannheim that war and mass unemployment are inherent in an unregulated capitalism, then his profound belief that such a system must be inexorably supplanted by a planned society is

has become very fashionable today and is widely employed by contemporary sociologists. For a more extensive discussion, cf. Sebastian De Grazia, The Political Community: A Study of Anomie (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

⁵ Karl Mannheim, Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 19. This is a posthumous publication of the last systematic treatise on which Mannheim was working. Unfortunately, he died before its completion. However, as Adolph Lowe remarks in the foreword, it "may well be considered his political testament". Henceforth cited as "Freedom".

understandable. Until social institutions are coordinated and values integrated, chaos and the relapse into barbarism can never be very far away.

The irruption of mass-irrationality constitutes another diverse strand of Mannheim's analysis of modern society. Its essence is that extreme rationalization and extreme bureaucratization--the over-organization of life--is the salient feature of the mass society. The idea of "rationalization" actually originated with Hegel and Marx, along with the notion of "alienation", both of which expressed the thought that in modern society man had become a "thing", an object manipulated by an impersonal society, rather than a subject who could remake life in accordance with his own desires.

Mannheim's thesis is that the industrialization of life has resulted in the dominance of the large scale organization oriented exclusively to efficiency, with hierarchies which concentrate all decisions at the top. Only those people who are at the apex can see the interrelations of events, that is, can grasp the complexity of human affairs. Unfortunately, however, few men reach these rare vantage points. Even technical decisions are removed from the shop floor and given to specialized bodies that have no direct contact with work. The vast majority of men become part of the mechanical process, subordinate to the machine. In fact, modern society attains its highest stage of functional rationalization in its admini-

strative staff, whose members not only have their specifications prescribed, but in addition have their life plan, to a large extent, imposed in the form of a career in which the stages of advancement are clearly laid out beforehand. In this dehumanizing process, man surrenders his individuality and becomes part of a functionally rationalized complex of activities. since the concern is solely with efficiency, rather than human satisfactions, all solutions to problems are defined in relation to this single value. Mannheim called this "functional rationality", which he contrasted to "substantial rationality". The latter, which is the privilege of the select few who hold positions in society from which the major structural connections between different activities can be perceived, Mannheim defined as "the capacity to act intelligently in a given situation on the basis of one's insight into the interrelations of events,"⁶ that is, the application of reason to human affairs. Functional rationality which is promoted by industrialization and which is the fate of the vast majority of mankind, Mannheim defined as "the organization of the activity of the members of society with reference to objective ends."⁷ An example of this is the limited thought processes of the ordinary soldier as compared to the over-all view accessible to the leader of

⁶ Man and Society, p. 58. ⁷ Ibid.

large-scale operations.

This concentration of decision-making not only creates conformity but stunts the initiative of subordinates and leaves them unsatisfied in their personal need for gratification and distinction. The boredom and routine of everyday life, which is due to widespread rationalization, creates a latently explosive psychological power which, in situations of general insecurity, can result in the Nazi experience in Germany. Hence, in normal times, the necessity for sports and the entertainment industry to provide the masses with "circuses". Every civilization in history, according to Mannheim, has found it necessary to provide ways to sublimate man's irrational psychic energies and to canalize them into harmless channels. For ironically enough, unconditional submission to extreme rationality deprives the individual of the power to act rationally, that is, in accordance with reason, and this frustration seeks release in irrational ways. Mannheim described this process by speaking of self-rationalization, which refers to the way in which an individual, caught in the limited segments of great rational organizations, comes systematically to regulate his ways of thought, his aspirations and his manner of life in strict accordance with the rules and regulations of the organization. The rational organization is, therefore, an alienating organization: as rationality increases and its locus, its control, is moved

from the individual to the large-scale organization, the chance of most men to reason is destroyed. Hence, the paradoxical situation is created whereby you have rationality without reason. Life in such a society makes men uneasy and vaguely anxious. Normally, however, the routinization of the job dulls the edge of aimlessness and frustration and provides some security; while emotional energy may be fixed on certain objects: love of one's home, garden or children. Meanwhile man

becomes increasingly accustomed to being led by others and gradually gives up his own interpretation of events for those which others give him. Thus, when the rationalized mechanism of social life collapses in times of crisis, the individual cannot repair it by his own insight. Instead his own impotence reduces him to a state of terrified helplessness.⁸

Because of the growing interdependence of modern complex society, every maladjustment in the social organism is a threat to the whole subtle machinery of social life. Any disequilibrium upsets the delicate balance of social life and reverberates upon the individual. His normal patterns of life disrupted, man loses the moorings provided by the articulated social structure to which he belonged. With the breakdown of social allegiances and the loss of faith in traditional values, he is deprived of his satisfactions and self-respect. Frustrated, possessed of unattached energies which society is no longer able to channel into useful activity, man regresses to primitive forms of action. Openaggression and relapse

⁸ Ibid., p. 59.

into mass hysteria become the dominant modes of expression. This disintegration of traditional social controls and the atrophy of meaningful human relations leave man demoralized, bereft of the social ties that gave him support, security and recognition. He is rendered helpless and insecure, ready to cling to anyone who comes along. As Mannheim perceptively pointed out:

The raw material for chaos is not the undisciplined barbarism but the overdisciplined factory worker or soldier who in consequence loses vitality whenever the plant closes down or when there is no one to give commands. ⁹

Unable to assign responsibilities correctly (that is, the impersonal bureaucratic system itself), the masses act from mere emotional impulse, lashing out at the incomprehensible forces that command their lives.

In this situation the scapegoat, such as the Jew, affords a real relief by providing an opportunity for once more externalizing the aggressive tendencies, an opportunity ¹⁰ that is equally welcome to the frustrated in every class.

At this stage, the mass is particularly susceptible to manipulation by the stimuli which bombard them from those who seek their favour. Unstable, and anxiety-ridden, the masses may search out new social arrangements as a substitute for their loss of community. However, the flight to totalitarianism, as Mannheim pointed out, is suffused with tension and requires continuous renewal.

⁹ Freedom, p. 14.

¹⁰ Man and Society, p. 129.

Despair, of course, is at the bottom of all totalitarian successes. However, the attempt to escape anxiety by blotting out one's own identity can never provide a satisfactory or lasting solution. For the social solidarity resulting from the totalitarian organization of society only offers the comforts of a pseudo-community. It can only promise a compulsive conformity based on coercion and regimentation. Unfortunately, however, many who have been exposed to general insecurity, enjoy the inescapable automatism of the machine and are glad when they can abdicate responsibility for planning their lives to the dictates of the leader. Hence, Mannheim warned, it is incumbent upon a wise democracy to ensure^{that} the masses do not turn to such false gods; that "the irrationalities and emotional outbreaks which are characteristic of amorphous human agglomerations"¹¹ are effectively sublimated. We can best do this, Mannheim assured us, by guarding the social mechanism against a disastrous breakdown and by creating meaningful human relations, with well-defined group patterns in which the individual is firmly rooted. This militates against the danger of a reversion to crowd behaviour and guards against sudden reversion to a chaotic, shapeless mass vulnerable to the blandishments of the propagandist and the demagogue.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 61.

The third basic trend, Mannheim discerned in contemporary society, is "fundamental democratization" which is a rather fuzzy term Mannheim employed to describe the entry into political life of those classes which hitherto had remained inert and passive. With the onset of the industrial system and the rise of democracy, the passive multitude have become invigorated, and now insist on playing an active role in social life. This participation of the masses, in areas which hitherto had been reserved to the elite, has had far-reaching ramifications on society as a whole. In this view, the consequences of democratization are seen as the spread of incompetence into new areas and, indeed, the emergence of a type of man who may be found in all sectors of social life--the mass-man.

The problem stems from the fact, that whereas earlier the mass accepted the position allocated to it at the base of the pyramid, now it arrogates to itself the right to set standards of attainment and behaviour which formerly were the exclusive province of the traditional cultural-bearing elites. The result is a cultural vacuum in which no group is able to give moral direction to society. Thus Mannheim has written:

The lack of leadership in late liberal mass society can...be...diagnosed as the result of the change for the worse in selecting the elite. We must recognize further that it is this general lack of direction in modern mass society that gives the opportunity to groups with

dictatorial ambitions. ¹²

There is an absence of standards to which appeal can be made; and resort to violence becomes characteristic of the age.

Mannheim, although in favour of democracy, saw great danger in the widespread intervention of intellectually backward elements into new areas of social life; for the masses represent the substitution of the standardless appetites of the mass market for the dictates of reason and sober restraint. Hence, democracy, instead of becoming "a vehicle of rationalizing tendencies in the society...may well act as an organ of the uninhibited expression of momentary emotional impulses." ¹³

When elites are easily accessible, they are subject to the pressure of the masses to conform to the transitory general will. The essential precondition of the mass society is the loss of insulation of the elites. As Mannheim pointed out:

Between elites and the masses stand certain social structures, which,...mediate between the elites and the masses. Here, too, it can be shown that the transition from the liberal democracy of the few to real mass-democracy destroys this intermediate structure and heightens the significance of the completely fluid mass. ¹⁴

¹² Ibid., p. 87.

¹³ Karl Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), p. 173.

¹⁴ Man and Society, p. 97. Mannheim believed that the vitality of intermediate organizations, or what he called "primary groups", was an important guarantee against the rise of an amorphous, undifferentiated mass. For the role of such groups in relation to the mass society, cf. Chapter I of this thesis.

Specifically, according to Mannheim, democratization results in such undesirable effects as: 1) an increase in the number of elites to the point where they are no longer able to set the tone for the whole of society; and 2) a breakdown of the exclusiveness of elites--that insulation from mass pressures which permitted the elite to maintain their distinctive identity.

The import of Mannheim's critique is that creative elites are objectively necessary for the maintenance and development of culture. The mass is implicitly defined in contrast to these elites and, hence, is conceived of as being essentially unqualified. In fact, according to Mannheim:

The crisis of culture in liberal-democratic society is due, in the first place, to the fact that the social processes...have become obstacles to the forming of elites because wider sections of the population still under unfavourable social conditions take an active part in cultural activities.¹⁵

Hence, a mass society is one which does not permit elites to carry out their cultural functions, that is, it is a society in which there is a loss of exclusiveness of elites, inevitably resulting in the sovereignty of the unqualified. Although Mannheim accepted the notion of the incompetent mass, any feeling of aristocratic disdain or contempt for the non-elite was totally absent. It was based, as Mannheim admitted, "upon the realization that as the culture and

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 85.

education of the less privileged have been neglected down the centuries, they can now assimilate and appreciate only things of inferior quality."¹⁶

However, Mannheim was not interested in making judgments as to the inherent competence of various strata of society; what he actually wished to identify was the social system in which the indispensable functions of creative elites cannot be performed. It was not so much that the mass is unfit in any literal sense as that the nature of the system prevents the emergence of an effective social leadership. Mannheim was not attempting to say that some given society taken as a whole, was a "mass society". He was merely interested in asserting a relation between two abstract concepts: "massification" and the quality of elites. Where there is high access to elites, popular pressure on the elites prevents them from performing their creative and culture-sustaining functions. When people are not expected to have any special qualifications to make different kinds of decisions, the creative elites, through whom culture is sustained, have no means of functioning. As Mannheim pointed out, areas such as education, leisure and politics have been deeply affected by this debilitation of elites. Among its consequences is that political and educational agencies must adapt themselves to the intervention of the mass by permitting participation on the basis of low

¹⁶ Freedom, p. 263.

standards of knowledge and conduct.

But this adaptation is not made without sacrifice. For elites cannot maintain their own standards and ultimately their own special identity and function if no provision is made for separating the qualified from the unqualified. Excellence is submerged and the elites lose the ability to set the standards for society. Hence the democratization of culture culminates in the triumph of equalitarian mediocrity. And this, warned Mannheim, can only end in disaster: for democracy today is confronted with far more complex decision problems than ever burdened early democratic society.¹⁷ The loss of homogeneity in the governing elite deprives society of resolute and wise leadership which only a qualified elite can provide. Hence, social problems remain unsolved and society drifts until the mass spews up leadership of its own which creates and manipulates the emotional, irrational symbols of the mass. The traditional culture-bearing elites, exposed to the pressures of an emergent mass, their self-confidence shaken, lose the will to resist. The criteria of race or of class is substituted for the achievement of excellence.

The only alternative to this dismal, but all too real picture, is the education and enlightenment of the masses coupled with certain neutralizing devices which would effectively limit mass participation in public decisions. This

¹⁷ The Sociology of Culture, p. 172.

is not meant, however, to completely stultify activity of the masses or to nullify democracy.

For it is sufficient, [Mannheim wrote], for democracy that the individual citizens, though prevented from taking a direct part in government all the time, have at least the possibility of making their aspiration felt at certain intervals. ¹⁸

Moreover, recruitment to the elite will be democratic in that it will not be limited to members of a closed group but will be society-wide.

Mannheim's real concern, however, was the education of the mass in reality-oriented ways of thinking in order to create responsible well-rounded individuals able to rationally participate in the political life of a fully developed democracy.

Mannheim's analysis of modern society can be rounded out with a discussion of, what he felt to be, the fourth salient feature of our age: the revolution in social techniques. Mannheim demonstrated that as a result of the progress of technology, our methods of influencing human behaviour have enormously increased in efficiency and pervasiveness. For example, Mannheim showed how new inventions in the military field have enormously enhanced the concentration of power. The possibility of citizens overthrowing an unpopular regime have correspondingly declined. Similarly, in the field of government, the scope and size of administration has been vastly

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 179.

extended. For the modern means of travel and communication and the scientific management of large-scale organizations have greatly facilitated centralized government and control. Similar concentration can also be observed in the means of forming public opinion. The mechanized mass production of ideas through press, radio, and television inexorably works in this direction. Even man's very recreations, by the control of, and propaganda through, literature, the cinema and the theatre, can fall under domination. And when you add to this, the possibility of controlling schools and the whole range of education from a single center, you realize the vast extent and pregnant possibilities of the changes in social techniques.

However, as Mannheim demonstrated, these modern techniques, like all techniques, are neither good nor bad in themselves.

Everything depends on the use that is made of them by the human will. The most important thing about these modern techniques is that they tend to foster centralization and, therefore, minority rule and dictatorship....Processes and events are no longer the outcome of natural interplay between small self-contained units. No longer do individuals and their small enterprises arrive at an equilibrium through competition and mutual adjustment. In the various branches of social and economic life there are huge combines, complex social units, which are too rigid to reorganize themselves on their own account and so must be governed from the center. ¹⁹

According to Mannheim, this centralization has resulted in the establishment of key positions in modern society, making

¹⁹ Diagnosis, p. 5.

planning not only possible but inevitable. It is the distinguishing feature of totalitarian states that they have utilized these techniques to maintain total control over their citizens, and Mannheim feared, that it was only a question of time and opportunity when some group, in hitherto democratic countries, will also make use of them. In this connection, catastrophes like war, severe depression or inflation, which dictate the use of extraordinary measures, (that is, concentration of the maximum power in the hands of some government) are bound to precipitate this process. Even before the outbreak of war, the permanent tension brought about by the existing totalitarian states, enforced in the democratic countries, very often, measures similar to those which, in the totalitarian states, came into force only through revolution. Of course, during a war or permanent preparation for war, the tendencies towards concentration will increase.

Hence, the end of laissez-faire and the necessity for planning are unavoidable consequences of the present situation and the nature of modern techniques. However, as Mannheim freely acknowledged in a prescient passage:

When we consider the possibilities of social techniques, we naturally regard them with very mixed feelings. It is impossible to rid ourselves of the idea that the subtler the influence over the human mind becomes, the more skillful our handling of social relationships, the greater the danger that we may be caught in a trap. The greater the pride of achievement, the greater the alarm at the power which one man has over another. But just as there

is no retreat from rationalization, so it is impossible to turn our backs on this increasing knowledge; the problem is rather to draw the right conclusions from the new possibilities. ²⁰

While all of us might have preferred the rugged individualism of another era,

it is not given to us to choose the epoch in which we live or the problems we are called upon to solve. The concentration of all kinds of controls--economic, political, psychological, and mechanical--has gone so far...that the question is only who shall use these means of control for what end. For used they will certainly be. ²¹

The four basic themes outlined above, Mannheim believed, constituted the deep and abiding problems of our age. The issues raised by these four trends of development would seem to be cause for a profound pessimism. The atomization of society, typified by a socially and geographically uprooted mass, highly vulnerable to manipulation and mobilization by mass-oriented elites, offers little solace for those beckoned by faith in humanity's future. Mannheim, however, with a determined belief in man's ineluctable progress, pointed out ²² that these developments also contain positive features. The disappearance, for example, of tradition and custom as the controlling fact of man's existence has freed him from ignorance and fear. The commands of the local authorities no longer evoke blind obedience. The emancipated person is less

²⁰ Man and Society, p. 262.

²¹ Freedom, p. 8.

²² Ibid., p. 73.

rigid, more capable of dealing with unforeseen circumstances than his custom-bound predecessor. An openness to new concepts and novel ways of thinking has enormously advanced man's intellectual and technological progress. A new self-confidence has taken the place of unconditional subservience, both in man's relation to man and his relation to nature. The advance of the physical sciences now enables man to dominate his natural environment; the progress of the social sciences seems to open up a comparable prospect of control over his social life. A genuine democracy, coupled to rational science and the diffusion of knowledge based on the enlightenment of its citizens, is no longer utopian. Moreover, internationally, with the tremendous improvements in the means of communication and travel, and the complexity of today's world, man's interdependence ceases to be a pious platitude, but has become a vital reality. The possibilities for emancipated man allied to a comprehensive science of society are limitless.

Enamoured with the potentialities inherent in our scientific age, Mannheim directed his energies to demonstrating that we now have in our power the ability to rationally master the irrational; that is, to create and determine our own destiny. The exciting and wildly attractive prospect of man usurping God's role exercised an irresistible attraction for Mannheim. Having drunk the heady wine of reason, he was the foremost advocate of its infinite possibilities and unlimited application to society.

The utility of Mannheim's analysis of the trends in contemporary society is not that it permits us to rigidly label the state of development in any given society. Rather, it may help us to be forewarned concerning the emergence of certain features, which may weaken without destroying or significantly characterize yet not wholly dominate, modern social life. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that Mannheim's analysis was meant to initiate rather than to terminate inquiry. At the same time, it must be conceded that his conclusions are those of a profoundly perceptive thinker who has illuminated the salient characteristics of our age.

CHAPTER IV

PRESCRIPTION

If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
If I am only for myself--then what am I for?
--Hillel, the Elder

In the last chapter Mannheim's diagnosis of the crisis of Western society was examined. His hypotheses concerning the main dangers and obstacles to the viability of democracy were discussed, and conversely, the new-found opportunities to circumvent these problems, were pointed out. It is the purpose of this chapter to set out the comprehensive formula, developed by Mannheim, for dealing with these fundamental changes in our social life.

Always goaded on by a sense of urgency, Mannheim attempted to bring to birth an all-inclusive approach to the great issues of our time. Although, preoccupied with the "age of transformation", Mannheim was no revolutionary.¹ His radicalism was actually born of a deep conservatism. His yearning was for stability. Although strongly committed to freedom, "both in the narrow political sense and in the

¹ Cf. Jean Floud, "Karl Mannheim", The Function of Teaching, A.V. Judges, editor (London: Faber & Faber, 1961), p. 42.

broader sense of freedom from irrational psychological and social pressures",² Mannheim came to believe that such freedom was impossible in a disordered society. Change, or, in Mannheim's terminology, "social reconstruction", was, therefore unavoidable. However, it was to be channelled and controlled at all times. Mannheim's planning, therefore, was an effort to take charge of change, to forestall it, to guide it, and if possible, to banish or mitigate it altogether.

However, since this was likely to prove impossible of achievement, at least in the near future, we must attempt to attain, Mannheim argued, some kind of planned dynamic equilibrium. To do this, a fundamental rethinking, of our attitude to the relationship of the individual to his society, is mandatory. Unfortunately, however, the terms Mannheim employed to describe this badly needed reassessment were not always very wise. Neither "planned thinking" (shades of 1984) nor "thinking at the level of planning" (a rather ambiguous phrase) elicited the kind of "agonizing reappraisal", Mannheim deemed so necessary if man was to successfully meet the fateful problems of the twentieth century. Actually, Mannheim probably came closest to defining the main purpose of his new mode of thinking with the slogan, "Planning for Freedom". For it was his thesis that the fundamental changes taking place in society

² Ibid.

dictate the necessity of planning, if the basic values of our Western heritage are to be safe-guarded.

In fact, according to Mannheim, planning is not only desirable, but also inevitable. Given the transformation of the structural values of modern society, the choice is no longer between laissez-faire and planning, but only between good planning and bad. For a policy of laissez-faire is no longer applicable. Both in the cultural sphere and in economics, the pressures of large competing units confound the individual. Moreover, there is a rift in men's consciousness: for man's picture of his own society has not yet caught up to the profound changes in its technical and structural foundations. And where such adjustment is not made, collective insecurity follows, with the inevitable concomitants of war or revolution.

Mannheim's belief in the inevitability of planning owed part of its confidence to the trend of modern government and the change to what he called the social service state (that is, the welfare state). The enactment of social reforms, efforts to combat the business cycle, the widening conception of public utility, and the great increase in defence expenditures, have all enhanced the pivotal role of the state. Realizing this, Mannheim was fearful that such decisive power should become vested in the wrong hands. The struggle of social groups to capture for themselves the chance of

planning and controlling society made Mannheim apprehensive for the future. Since he considered--perhaps somewhat hastily--laissez-faire (or whatever was left of it in a world of imperfect competition and pressure-group legislation) as completely hopeless, planning was the only alternative. The question that preoccupied Mannheim, was whether this planning was to be of the free type or totalitarian in its implications.

So far, however, only totalitarianism with its two variants, Fascism and Communism, have attempted comprehensive planning. However, these attempts, Mannheim believed, are doomed to failure. The totalitarian answers are those of a panic stricken mind: the application of the ancient patterns of command and coercion to every sphere of life. However, Mannheim was acutely aware that totalitarianism arose as a real response to pressing problems, even though its concrete measures often created greater evils than **they** attempted to cure. Mannheim, therefore, attempted the following examination of totalitarianism in order to demonstrate the necessity of providing a realistic alternative.

Both versions of totalitarianism, Mannheim recognized, owed their success to the disruption and disintegration of society. Both realized that security on the physical and psychological planes were vital demands of the human being. Both recognized the importance of providing conscious guidance to society. In other words, both movements provided

direction and planning in all spheres of man's activities.

However, Mannheim reminds us, the two totalitarian variants are also alike in that they resort predominantly to regimentation and coercion. Ends which may be desirable and necessary are pursued by means which make no attempt to obtain intelligent cooperation or consensus. The self-realization and freedom of the individual is stunted and intelligent adaptation prevented. Absolute power is concentrated in the party which extends its purview into every area of social life. All rights are surrendered to the all-embracing State and the life of the citizen becomes unbearably regimented and stultified. While Fascism takes a cynical and brutal view of man, Communism is over-hopeful and resorts, therefore, to force to bring man's actions to a level approaching their unattainable ideal. As Mannheim acutely observed:

The dangerous fallacy in the communist argument is that its champions promise to pay for every inch of lost freedom in the intermediary period of dictatorship with an undated cheque on a better future... However, once a dictatorial system, whatever its social content, seizes the educational apparatus, it does everything to obliterate the memory and need of free thought and free living; it does its utmost to transform free institutions into tools of a minority.³

Under the totalitarian system, freedom yields to regimentation, cooperation to coercion, and education is transformed into indoctrination. In the midst of chaos, the

³ Freedom, p. 28.

totalitarian organization of society might appear to be the panacea. However, in the end, such regimentation defeats its own purpose. Society becomes a battleground of extremes. Competition among different factions for hegemony intensifies the conflict for power to an extreme degree. The erection of force and suppression into twin pillars of government is a reactionary and futile policy, according to Mannheim.

Either dissatisfaction breaks out in such a form that it can no longer be reabsorbed into the social organism, namely in insurrections and counter-revolutions, or the dominant groups lose contact with the vital tissue of social life and become so bureaucratic that the insight born of day-to-day activity becomes impossible. An unrealistic sort of regimentation disrupts and in the end by means of 'planning' prevents the orderly functioning of economic and cultural life.⁴

Clearly, then, the fundamental task of achieving a planned social order must be to avoid the negative values of laissez-faire anarchism and the positive dangers of dictatorial absolutism. Mannheim's primary objective was to demonstrate that the only realistic alternative was his "Planning for Freedom". His efforts were dedicated to educating his contemporaries into a radically new conception of planning and, what he regarded to be, a more realistic understanding of the meaning of freedom.

Mannheim was, naturally, very much concerned that his type of planning win general acceptance. He realized, however,

⁴ Man and Society, p. 113.

that planning in the popular mind was generally synonymous with economic planning. While he certainly accorded full respect to the importance of economic factors, Mannheim's conception of planning extended to the social and cultural spheres. While economic planning was devoted primarily to the achievement of material ends, Mannheim, also wished to plan for social and cultural values. Hence, his total socio-psychological planning is a conception of quite a different order.

Mannheim was not merely attempting to reconcile some freedom with some planning. This was remote from his thinking and badly misconstrues his whole approach, which was directed to proving that both concepts, planning and freedom, are complimentary, and that they are not only meaningless, but dangerous, if not linked together. When man emerged from the state of nature, he realized that his rights as a citizen were inseparable from his obligations to the State. Similarly, Mannheim argued, man must come to the realization that his freedom can only be enlarged and made more rational, by willing acceptance of the claims of a democratically organized plan which provides for, and guarantees his freedom, within the scope of the plan. It is time, Mannheim asserted, that we jettison the outdated conception of freedom which accepted the blind play of social forces as part of our freedom, simply because these forces were anonymous and

⁵ impersonal. To allow man to remain a slave of blind physical and social forces is not freedom. Freedom to starve because interference with the workings of the economy might endanger its alleged automatic adjustments is a luxury we cannot afford. Rather, freedom, in our technological age, consists in the assertion of total control over our natural and social environments. The essence of planning, for Mannheim, is that man becomes the autonomous subject of his own development. From now on, the struggle with nature and with social organization will be guided by his own progress in knowledge. A profound definition of Mannheim's conception of planning is provided by J.M. Murry in a testimonial to Mannheim after his death:

Planning is the activity of consciousness whereby man escapes from the bondage of false freedom, which is the freedom to destroy himself by defect of consciousness, into authentic freedom: the condition established for him by a society which is consciously and conscientiously self-regulated.⁶

When men continue to demand and to exercise freedoms of a type that are obsolete and anachronistic, they set in motion social forces which undermine collective security and result

⁵ As illustration, Mannheim gives the example of primitive man who feels that his freedom has been circumscribed when a doctor saves him from the blind forces of an epidemic by inoculation.

⁶ Murry, op.cit., p. 154. Murry was one of the group of thinkers, mentioned in Chapter II, with whom Mannheim met over a period of years.

in dislocation and upheaval. Hence, we must advance beyond these outmoded ways of thought to a realization that, today, our freedom consists in the rearrangement and manipulation of our social environment, so that the individual will not be frustrated by destructive conflicts and the paralysis of intelligent decision-making, which are unavoidable under contemporary conditions in the absence of planning.

However, Mannheim was very careful, on the one hand, to distinguish his notion of planning from the utopian attempt to found a new society--which he termed, "establishment"--and on the other, from the administration of a satisfactorily planned society as a viable entity. Mannheim's concept of planning is completely opposed to the idea (usually associated with utopian planning) of developing a blueprint of a new social order and reshaping society according to its specifications, totally ignoring the legacy of the old unplanned system. Mannheim acknowledged the fact that there is no unlimited power of free disposition and that one must adopt the strategy of working with or against existing social currents from the most favourable positions of control that can be discovered. Mannheim:

does not pretend to act as a creator of these forces, but rather as a strategist, who only watches over the factors at work in society in order to detect the new possibilities which are coming to the surface at the proper moment, and to reinforce them at those points where vital decisions must be made.⁷

⁷ Man and Society, p. 190. In Mannheim's deification of

Moreover, Mannheim asserted that such planning need not result in the barren conformity produced by totalitarian regimes. One can also plan for freedom and variety. In both cases, coordination plays a great role. However, in a democracy coordination of social institutions and techniques so that they do not cancel each other out, means the harmonizing of their powers to produce a many-sided individuality.⁸ This can be achieved by manipulation of the social process from certain key points. It is these pivotal positions in society from which the desired guidance will emanate. Ostensibly circumscribed and restrained, Mannheim's planning, interferes only at certain strategic control-points. But this ascetic policy actually signifies economy of means rather than modesty of objectives. For Mannheim wrote: "Planning is the reconstruction of an historically developed society into a unity which is regulated more and more perfectly by mankind from certain central positions."⁹ The planning, though not motivated by a totalitarian ethos, will be total.

Freedom in a planned society, Mannheim explained, will

a capitalized History, there are strong Hegelian overtones. The potentialities of the individual are only actualized in a responsiveness to the promptings of history.

⁸ As illustration of what he is referring to, Mannheim gives the example of the conductor who coordinates the different instruments in the orchestra. It is up to him whether his authority be used to achieve monotony or polyphony (variety).

⁹ Man and Society, p. 193.

differ from freedom in the abstract sense, which he defined as:

Nothing but a disproportion between the growth of the radius of effective central control, on the one hand, and the size of the group unit to be influenced on the other. As long as organized control lags behind spontaneous social integration, there are possibilities of choosing and ways of escape. Since freedom is essentially the chance for spontaneous initiative, everything is reduced to the question of how great are the possibilities of individual choice in a given situation, and what are the available ways of escaping the apparatus of coercion.¹⁰

However, in the planned society, freedom is not to be achieved by rigidly circumscribing the powers of the planner but by guaranteeing and incorporating the existence of essential forms of freedom through the plan itself. Hence, the freedom derived from a system of checks and balances will be supplanted by a freedom secured within the overall scope of a comprehensive plan.¹¹

In an interesting and persuasive analogy,¹² Mannheim compared the American and French constitutions, which were designed to organize a balanced system of governmental authority and institutions, with his own concept of planning.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 161.

¹¹ In another of Mannheim's ingenious examples, he mentions the instance of a boarding school which plans the whole scope of its activities, including the provision that, at certain times, the students be left entirely free. While retaining mastery over the whole situation, certain student activities are left completely unhampered. This sort of deliberate refraining from interference, Mannheim felt, was radically different from the "purposeless non-interference" of the laissez-faire variety.

¹² Freedom, p. 117.

He suggested that the constitution-makers may be considered the precursors of "Planning for Freedom". "Their main concern was an equilibrium of powers to prevent the growth of forces leading to the tyranny of a single individual, of a small group, or of the masses."¹³ While such limited controls were sufficient to achieve their purpose in the agrarian economy of a predominantly rural society, new ways of planning are now necessary if we are to deal with monopoly capitalism in a highly urbanized society. Instead of the anachronistic policy of checks and balances which was appropriate to another era, the preservation of freedom today, demands the extension of democratic controls to safeguard the structural basis of freedom.

However, Mannheim accepted as ultimate values the ancient historical liberties, such as freedom of expression, opinion, association and movement. These he regarded as special obligations to be met by the new society. Moreover, they would serve as a salutary check on exaggerated dogmatism in planning. Hence, within the planned structure, free zones would be provided to offer opportunities for, what Mannheim termed, "creative evolution and individuality". This new conception of freedom in society,

since it has the whole coordinated system of social techniques within its grasp, can safeguard itself

¹³ Ibid.

against dictatorial encroachment on certain spheres of life, and can incorporate the charters of these citadels within its structure and its constitution.¹⁴

Because the liberal age concerned itself solely with the propagation of the idea of freedom, the planned society will have to replace the old pattern of traditional conformity, which is disintegrating, with a new one. Mannheim insisted, nevertheless, that in addition to planning for a certain amount of necessary conformity, provision will be made for citadels of self-determination in the regulated social order.

For Mannheim was willing to concede:

that it is not necessary to enforce basic consensus on more complicated issues in those spheres in which individual creed or free experimentation are the best promoters. Here we can learn from Liberalism that the highest forms of spiritual life flourish best in Freedom. To put it quite briefly, we must establish a set of basic virtues such as decency, mutual help, honesty, and social justice, which can be brought home through education and social influence, whereas the higher forms of thought, art, literature, etc., remain as free as they were in the philosophy of Liberalism.¹⁵

Having shown that our freedom will not be crushed out by planning, Mannheim argued that planning is, also, compatible with democratic practice. The traditional institutional safeguards, however, will have to be modified to meet the demands of the new age. To appreciate Mannheim's approach to this problem, a brief discussion of his boldly sociological approach to parliamentary institutions is in order.

¹⁴ Man and Society, p. 264.

¹⁵ Diagnosis, pp. 119-120.

In fact, Mannheim called for a radical rethinking of all our traditional attitudes to such concepts as the State, government and society.

For instance, the parliamentary system first arose, Mannheim suggested, as an attempt to control the absolutist bureaucracy, which the middle classes regarded as a threat to their way of life. The bourgeoisie equated State with bureaucracy, and society with congeries of free and private organizations. Hence, they made every effort to limit bureaucratic power and expand the province of the market place and free associations. Such an approach, Mannheim claimed, is now obsolete; For other organizations in society are at least as important as the State and just as likely to encroach upon man's life and freedoms. The old dualism between bureaucracy and a free society is an anachronism in an age when their boundaries are increasingly overlapping. Both can be bureaucratic and dangerous to freedom if allowed to expand without checks or safeguards. Several factors have contributed to this change, according to Mannheim.¹⁶ Among private interests, bureaucracies have developed that sometimes equal the national bureaucracy in strength and power. The distinction between elected, appointed, or self-appointed management personnel has tended to become vague. Both public and private

¹⁶ Freedom, p. 43.

corporations perform functions that are politically relevant, that is, concern the public interest. In addition, many occupational and other voluntary associations have assumed public significance; their coordination is no longer a simple matter of private decision. With the State playing an active role in all phases of life, the old boundary lines no longer hold.

Hence, to Mannheim, the arbitrary dichotomy between State and society, which at one time might have been justified, is now simply outmoded: for public responsibility has become interwoven in the whole fabric of society.

Freedom consists not in denying this interpenetration but in defining its legitimate uses in all spheres, setting limits and deciding the pattern of penetration and last but not least, in safeguarding public responsibility and shared control over decisions.¹⁷

This raises the question whether the machinery of our parliamentary system is sufficiently strong and efficient to bring under its control the various new key positions which exercise such a decisive influence over men's lives. Hence, Mannheim examined some of the historical virtues of representative government which, he suggested, could also be utilized under a system of comprehensive planning.¹⁸

One of the major advantages of parliamentary government is that it integrates the social forces in society. It provides a forum for their expression and constructive compromise. Based

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 44-45.

¹⁸ Ibid.

on the territorial principle, it sees that no sectional interests predominate at the polls. The voter is called out as a citizen, not as a member of a sect, profession or class. Being able to influence the course of government, promotes a sense of civic responsibility and community identification among the citizenry.

Moreover, the institution of periodic elections and chief executives ensures public accountability and establishes the responsibility of government to the governed. Rotation in office assures peaceful changes in leadership and gives opportunities to new men and new policies. In addition, only a genuinely representative system makes constructive use of opposition and criticism, thereby ensuring a flexibility and vitality which dictatorships simply do not possess.

All these virtues, Mannheim wished to see preserved in the functioning of the planned society. He realized, however, that there is a strong affinity between planning and the one-party system, thereby providing an inherent tendency towards the establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship. The necessity of formulating and executing a consistent plan for the whole of society for a five or ten year period inherently creates a bias in favour of dictation and coercion. And this, Mannheim realized, is what makes the challenge to democracy so serious.

The time has passed, when the creation of a political

consensus can be left to chance or haphazard methods. Either democracy must discover new ways of creating a unified political will by voluntary agreement, or some form of totalitarianism will be the result. However, even in a planned democracy under no circumstances will the forces of opposition be dissipated or criticism suppressed. The party system, the form through which opposition is channeled, will, however, have to be changed somewhat. The classical conditions under which it formerly operated will be modified to stress cooperation as against excessive competition. As Mannheim freely admitted:

Democracy in an age of planning is confronted with an almost paradoxical task. On the one hand, the dynamic and critical powers of the party system are to be strengthened. On the other hand, the parties must become aware of their collective responsibility and of the limits to opposition within any comprehensive plan of social reform.¹⁹

Mannheim took it for granted that the existence of glaring attention-demanding problems in society would ensure that a fundamental consensus on the need for planning, by political parties, would be easily achieved.

If democracies can plan during war-time, then, Mannheim argued, we should also be able to direct our social life in times of peace. Surely, the evils of mass unemployment, run-away inflation or the very danger inherent in democracy itself,²⁰ can rouse the people to efforts comparable

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 36.

²⁰ Cf. Chapter III.

to those of wartime. And just as changes were made in the Cabinet during the war without changing the objective of winning the war, in the same way, in a planned society, "means²¹ and men might be changed in the pursuit of a fixed goal", which would, of course, be the attainment of a planned society.

The parties could fight one another on the comprehensive issue of alternative plans or alternative methods of their realization. Even a multiple-party system, requiring a coalition government, could plan. All it requires, according to Mannheim, is a basic agreement to abide by certain essential planning measures for the time of the planning period, while superficial issues could be dealt with as they arose.

However, certain objective preconditions would have to be fulfilled by any plan that was to command wide-spread²² agreement. Firstly, the plan would have to be consistent. Because we are living in an age of interdependence, any friction tends to become cumulative. Therefore, reforms must be comprehensive and correlated.

Secondly, the plan must be acceptable to the majority. It cannot be so radical that it appeals only to those few in society who have nothing to lose; nor should it be so conservative that it bolsters the vested interests of minority. Because it represents guided reform rather than chaotic

²¹ Ibid., p. 164.

²² Ibid., p. 36.

revolution, it will appeal to the center, the majority in any stable society. It is this group, Mannheim blithely assumed, whatever their differences on concrete issues, who will agree on the necessity of reform and accept peaceful methods of achieving it. They will be able to compromise on any given programme or, at least, Mannheim hopefully believed, be willing to submit the question to majority decision while still retaining their long-range goals.

In addition he envisaged the establishment of a new institution outside the general machinery of the representative system though forming an integral part of the political process. We may call it an Order. We would define it as a voluntary organization, recruited from the most prominent representatives of various strata and elements of the community. This body should serve to maintain democracy and freedom by mediating in cases where democratic pluralism might lead to a stalemate and to indecision in planning operations. This agency should be a kind of supreme tribunal to guarantee consistency and continuity in planning. ²³

By remaining above party politics, this body of highly esteemed and disinterested men, would gain great moral prestige and become the conscience of the community.

While the creation of such a body, Mannheim realized, would have to await the establishment of a planned society, he hoped it would fulfill something of the same sort of function as a supreme court. It would act as a tribunal, overseeing the intrinsic consistency of the basic principles of the planning

²³ Ibid., p. 166.

laws and the conformity of subsequent regulations and enactments.

Out of this discussion emerges what Mannheim considered to be the preconditions of planning. It remains to examine the means by which the rational planned society is to be attained and this, in turn, involves a discussion of Mannheim's prodigious faith in the possibilities of applied sociology as the basis of planning.

Unable to accept religious dogma, Mannheim like Comte and Durkheim, believed that sociology could be made a way of salvation for mankind. He wrote in solemn and messianic terms of the New Age and the Third Way--the states of relative perfection that would result from the application of sociological knowledge to society. Sociology was Mannheim's obsession, an obsession that referred to the crisis of the modern world and to his firm conviction that only sociological reasoning could establish scientifically the conditions under which modern societies could most intelligently engage in the processes of adjustment. With the disintegration of tradition and the development of the social sciences, the science of society had emerged.

One of the basic problems of the contemporary age stems from its mode of thought. Preoccupied with a narrow compartmentalization, the uncoordinated, unsynthesized thinking of the specialized sciences has made the necessary cooperation between the different social sciences impossible. If we are

to gain valid knowledge of our social environment, Mannheim argued, these obsolete defence mechanisms will have to be overcome and the synthesis of results entrusted to the sociologist.

It is the special task of these sociologists to discover and understand each stage in man's historical development. Any given society, according to this approach, is to be comprehended in terms of the specific period in which it exists, and that within this historical type, various mechanisms of change come to some specific kind of intersection. These mechanisms, Mannheim--following John Stuart Mill--termed "principia media".²⁴ This concept is based on two premises: Firstly, that principles and laws, which almost invariably are imagined to hold true for all societies and all ages, actually only represent the structural laws of a particular historical configuration; and secondly, that the principia media are the interconnection of general laws of a given frame of reference as opposed to the isolated and individual factors which are only accidental to that unique constellation. It is these principia media which the social scientist, concerned with social structure, wishes to grasp. For "planning involves the discovery of those key-positions from which the ultimate principia media of the social process can

²⁴ Man and Society, p. 178.

be bent to do one's will...." Without the essential comprehension of the principia media of our contemporary era, intelligent planning is impossible.

Therefore, in order to utilize the principia media of complex configurations,

it is more and more necessary to think in terms of situations as wholes. It is essential, not only in practical life but in science itself, to know how to fit together in one's mind the different series of events, and to see how the individual events, institutions, and attitudes of mind are determined by each other. ²⁶

The abstract specialized knowledge of another age is simply not sufficient to meet the demands of a new civilization.

The attempt to solve complex problems by thinking in water-tight compartments and considering only individual, isolated goals is doomed to futility. For we are now living in an age when it is necessary to regulate not only single institutions but also the manner in which they are interrelated. Hence, if we are to become masters of our situation, so that we will not be arbitrarily driven by blind social forces, we must have the courage to utilize the opportunities presented to us by the development of the social sciences and novel modes of thought. If we are to transform man, Mannheim argued, we must first transform our habits of thought. ²⁷

Not satisfied with the profession of noble sentiments or lofty ideals, Mannheim attempted to provide the social

²⁵ Ibid., p. 194. ²⁶ Ibid., p. 233. ²⁷ Ibid., p. 236.

techniques and conceptions that would make it possible to achieve the planned society. To sociology was cast the role of the basic science, a synthesis of all the specialized sciences. It is now possible, Mannheim claimed, to foresee and control the consequences of any reform. Sociology is to be the new science of society.

Having examined the preconditions of planning and the means whereby it can be achieved, a discussion of the detailed objectives of Mannheim's planning is now in order.

As already pointed out,²⁸ the whole objective of Mannheim's planning is the preservation and enhancement of the freedom of the individual. This can best be done, according to Mannheim, by working for certain goals, which are both moderate and reasonable.²⁹ Under a policy of democratic planning there will be a balance between centralization and devolution of functions. While the demands of coordination dictate a certain amount of centralization, the tendency of centralized institutions to usurp all functions will be adamantly opposed. Moreover, planning will be consistent and devoted to common aims. It must resist, Mannheim argued, the special pleadings of partisan interests or the appeasement of pressure groups.

One of the foremost areas requiring an extension of

²⁸ Cf. supra, pp. 81-82.

²⁹ Freedom, p. 29.

planning controls is the economy. While other spheres of life also require planning,³⁰ Mannheim did believe that economic planning was of prime importance. For it is the dangerous instability of income and employment that has everywhere had a deleterious effect on democracy. Therefore, a wise economic policy would be one that ensured a high level of employment by maintaining an adequate rate of growth.

One of the oldest methods for dealing with unemployment is the dole. While Mannheim was willing to accept this as a stop gap measure, he felt it contributed little to social amelioration, and was utilized mainly because it didn't encroach upon the traditional conception of economic freedom. More promising tools, that could be employed, according to Mannheim, are public works and manipulation of the interest rate. Both act as counter cyclical measures, emanate from key positions, and have a minimum effect on private initiative. Mannheim also believed that such basic industries as power, transportation, mining and distribution of the necessities of life should be under public ownership. Although writing during the heyday of nationalization and government interference in the economy, Mannheim rejected complete public ownership and wage and price controls, which he felt, would result in a dangerous concentration of powers in the central government and a deadening of private initiative. Instead,

³⁰ Cf. supra, p. 76.

Mannheim pleaded for his "Third Way" or "Mixed System" which combined "the gradual redistribution of wealth and income through taxation with the expansion of social services and with ~~also~~ compensatory government spending...."³¹ All that is necessary to make such a system work most effectively, Mannheim argued, is realistic cooperation between capital and labour. Such cooperation under a planned society would obviate the necessity for a more radical transformation and ensure stability and progress to all groups in society.

Another problem worrying Mannheim was the role of the armed forces in the life of a democracy. With the development of missiles and atomic warfare there has been a concentration of decision-making powers in the hands of fewer and fewer military specialists. On the other hand modern warfare, because of its magnitude, has eliminated the distinction between combatants and non-combatants. What Mannheim wished to see was a national militia on a broad basis to prevent growth of an officer caste and, in addition, the education of the army in public affairs to ensure that it truly acts as the guardian of democracy.

Because "Planning for Freedom" requires an extension of government control throughout society, the role of the civil service naturally assumes increased significance. Mannheim envisaged that recruitment to the service would utilize

³¹ Freedom, p. 124.

scientific methods of selection and promotion. Supervision would be intelligent and effective. The major problem, however, is that of adapting the civil service to the demands of the twentieth century. Initiative, enterprise and scientific training coupled with human understanding must replace logical analysis, dispassionate judgment and classic learning as the qualities of the contemporary civil servant.

Democratic control of the mass media of communication constituted one of Mannheim's most controversial preoccupations. Mannheim argued that while agencies dispensing information, opinion and propaganda could safely be left alone as long as their power was dispersed, today their increasing radius of influence and concentration of control make some form of public control necessary. The press, particularly, has been under great pressure from privileged groups which seek to manipulate public opinion. Moreover, while the influence of the press has been widely extended, the proportion of people who can express their opinions and ideas through the press, has correspondingly decreased. It has ceased to be a forum in which the important currents and interests in society can be reflected. Mannheim proposed, therefore, that a body of public trustees, comparable to the boards of many universities, should be established to take control of the newspapers. This would serve two useful purposes: it would guarantee conformity of the newspaper to

democratic aims and would free it of dependence on monopolistic interests.

Radio and television, Mannheim suggested, could also be dealt with in the same way. In addition, the Crown corporation, which, has been employed in Britain and Canada and has worked very well, might be used more extensively. Mannheim's main concern was that the mass media accept the democratic belief in peaceful change and that its cultural level be raised.

As can be seen, therefore, far from starting with a tabula rasa, Mannheim envisaged planning as proceeding within the framework of mature democracies. In particular, he believed that it was the historical destiny of the Anglo-Saxon world to work out, from the basis of its liberal traditions, a compromise between the old and the new, the liberal and totalitarian systems; a system sufficiently planned, centralized and efficient to cope with the needs of a mass society, yet with enough liberty to avoid the crushing out of all those higher values which can only be cultivated through individual unregimented efforts. Mannheim specifically mentioned England with its ancient traditions and cultural homogeneity as being uniquely equipped to carry out the great experiment of a democratically planned order. In fact, England became the only possible home for the peculiar synthesis of rationality and freedom for which Mannheim stood.

The first step in the creation of a rationally planned society will be a modification of the war on tradition which led to a disintegration of value standards and a concomitant weakening of the norms that guide human conduct. The result is a moral chaos in which religious standards, family traditions, and neighbourly ethics were impoverished without being replaced by meaningful substitutes. This unsatisfactory state of affairs, Mannheim termed a "crisis in valuation".³²

Part of the blame, Mannheim placed squarely on laissez-faire Liberalism which "was characterized by a plurality of aims and values and a neutral attitude towards the main issues of life."³³ By mistaking neutrality for tolerance, the age of Liberalism left the final decisions "to the miracle of the self-equilibrating forces of economic and social life."³⁴ In fact, Mannheim argued:

This attitude of neutrality in our modern democracy went so far that we ceased to believe, out of mere fairness in our own objectives; we no longer thought that peaceful adjustment is desirable, that freedom has to be saved and democratic control has to be maintained.³⁵

Tolerance, Mannheim reminds us, does not mean tolerating the intolerant. Such complete non-interference with valuations leads to a neurotic anxiety and prepares the ground for willing

³² Cf. Diagnosis, Chapter II.

³³ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

submission to dictatorship.

Mannheim's answer, therefore, is that democracy must become militant if it is to survive. Militant, however,

only in the defence of the agreed right procedure of social change and those basic virtues and values--such as brotherly love, mutual help, decency, social justice, freedom, respect for the person, etc.--which are the basis of the peaceful functioning of a social order.... It will differ from the relativist laissez-faire of the previous age, as it will have the courage to agree on some basic values which are acceptable to everybody, who shares the tradition of Western civilization. ³⁶

The problem today, according to Mannheim, lies in the substitution of conscious deliberation and value appreciation for tradition and conventions by which consensus is usually achieved. In addition, Mannheim argued for a new system of education which would focus its main energies on the development of our intellectual powers to "bring about a frame of mind which can bear the burden of scepticism and which does not panic when many of the thought habits are doomed to vanish." ³⁷ Above all, Mannheim pleaded for a realistic policy: one which encouraged the development of man's reasoning powers while recognizing that all are not capable of assimilating this and, therefore, accepting the legitimate role of emotion and the need of many for the certainty that only dogma can provide.

Having examined Mannheim's partial solution to the problems raised by a laissez-faire society, the role of the

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 27.

elite in a planned society will now be scrutinized. As already
seen,³⁸ Mannheim regarded the existence of an independent elite
as an elementary prerequisite of social creativeness. Because
of the loss of exclusiveness of elites and the rise of mass
participation in cultural and political life, the preservation
of critical values had now become debilitated. Mannheim's
proposals are intended to counter this loss of insulation of
elites.

Firstly, Mannheim argued that the criteria for admission
to the ruling groups should be changed. The principle of merit
should be substituted for heredity and wealth. This can best
be effected, according to Mannheim, by providing opportunities
of ascent for all sections of the population, regardless of
social origin. However, he insisted that no lower but rather
higher standards of selection must be enforced. A valuable
aid in this direction is the invention of new methods of
scientific detection. Intelligence tests, aptitude tests and
even psychoanalysis could be utilized to provide comprehensive
tools for the study of the total personality. In accordance
with Mannheim's whole approach, he believed that scientific
methods could be applied to the measuring of ability and merit
so as to fit the man to his job and the job to the man.

Despite Mannheim's profound faith in the eventual

³⁸ Cf. Chapter III.

perfectibility of man, he was quite willing to see the future elite segregated during their period of schooling. In fact, he accepted completely the British system of "public" boarding schools, merely adding that more scholarships should be provided to facilitate the admission of all qualified pupils. He even went so far as to suggest, that if dilution threatened, more schools might be founded on the same pattern so that not only the select few but the best of the population, and ultimately all, might share the values of this educational system. But in a passage that summarizes Mannheim's beliefs on the subject, he warned that:

Wise democratization not only considers the numbers admitted to education, but carefully weighs the substance of what is to be transmitted. It is more important to preserve the highest forms of cultural achievement than to engage in sudden expansion. The demand for standards, rightly understood, is as democratic as that for numbers.³⁹

However, Mannheim did believe that the curriculum of the "public" schools must be changed. Instead of a programme of study in the classics, Mannheim wanted instruction in the social sciences to form the core of the curriculum. For how else could the reconstructed ruling class become adequately informed about society? For it is to them that the task must fall of providing the diagnosis of and therapy for contemporary problems. Such an elite must develop a blend of attitudes: an appreciation of the past combined with the vision of men open

³⁹ Freedom, p. 103.

to change and aware of the need for a creative transformation of society.

Apart from this primary consideration, however, Mannheim was anxious that the whole body of the educated elite should not be siphoned off into exclusively vocational or practical channels. He wanted a free-lance intelligentsia preserved as an indispensable antidote to the bureaucratization of society. For the institutional mentality lacks the dynamic ideas and imagination so necessary to a productive cultural life. Hence, it is imperative that the creative intelligentsia are supported and protected from the impact of over-organization.

One of the means, Mannheim suggested, by which free-lance activities could be encouraged was the provision of stipends which

should be allotted by a mixed jury, including a reasonable percentage of jurors who do not represent the views of official institutions, but do justice to changes in intellectual life which escape these large and self-contained bodies. Only those who have worked their way alone unsheltered by institutions, and have thus developed a sense of the new needs and currents in social life are able to develop the new approach which is needed, and to produce the really creative incentives.⁴⁰

In this eulogy of the independent intelligentsia, Mannheim reaffirmed his faith in the small dissenting group as a check against monotony and levelling in a planned culture. Such intellectual oases will protect "society in an Age of Masses

⁴⁰ Man and Society, p. 353.

from great danger lest the patterns of propaganda and advertising become models for cultural planning.⁴¹

The natural counterpoint to Mannheim's concern for the preservation of elites is the emergence of the masses; for the latter have intervened in areas previously reserved to the few, thereby weakening those groups who are the mainsprings of social creativeness. As a necessary corrective to this development, Mannheim suggested that the masses should not be able to criticize a social idea before it has been elaborated into workable form.

It is not improbable that a planned society will provide certain forms of closed social groups similar to our clubs, advisory councils or even sects, in which absolutely free discussion may take place without being exposed to pre-mature and unsatisfactory criticism by the broader public.⁴²

However, Mannheim was careful to state that admission to these secret societies or orders would be on a broad democratic basis; that members would have to maintain close and living contact with the masses; and that institutionalized channels must be provided through which the advice and recommendations of these sheltered groups could reach the planners.

While the institutional reforms proposed above are necessary and beneficial, they are still inadequate, according to Mannheim, "without a reconditioning of human behaviour."⁴³

⁴¹ Freedom, p. 265.

⁴² Man and Society, p. 111.

⁴³ Freedom, p. 173.

In fact, Mannheim's whole policy was based on a concern for the intellectual or spiritual transformation of modern man. Because we possess, what Mannheim called, a "science of human of behaviour"⁴⁴, it is now possible to systematically take stock of the impact of existing social constellations and then to modify the social forms themselves to serve our educational ends. These ends, in turn, will be formulated in the spirit of planning with a proper regard for the scientifically ascertained possibilities of the social situation. For, "there is no doubt that Democracy has lost the clear conception of the type of citizen it wants to create."⁴⁵

Mannheim, relying on Marx and G.H. Mead, developed the concept of "role-taking" in discussing the formation of personality.⁴⁶ In this theory, it is the set of social relationships which determine personality formation, that is, which generate character masks. "Society creates the personality pattern it desires by making the individual play certain roles."⁴⁷ In fact, "society with its network of relationships in logic and in fact precedes the individual and ego-formation."⁴⁸ Man, therefore, is strictly a function of his social environment. However, Mannheim wisely qualified this theory, by denying that man exactly reproduces the

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 179. ⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 199. ⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 239.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

imprint of social forces, and acknowledging that the uniqueness and nonconformity of each personality confounds such an oversimplified picture. Actually, all of Mannheim's efforts were directed to the preservation of the freedom and independence of the personality.

Unfortunately, however, in the past, we followed policies that had a destructive effect on the personality. In enshrining competition as a total way of life, it gained a hold on men's minds that undermined their whole character.

As soon as industrial society reaches the highest stages of individualism and slashes the bonds of custom and tradition through over-competition, urbanization and other processes, it leaves the individual without shelter...without any motive in primary groups, without a feeling of belonging....⁴⁹

Massification and the flight from the responsibilities of spiritual freedom and personal autonomy are the inevitable result.

To counter this, Mannheim argued, we must make a conscious attack on the problems of personality-formation, and on the basis of sound fundamental social relationships, produce the type of democratic personality suited to the new society. Such a democratic or "integrative" personality will involve a readiness for cooperation and respect for one's fellows. In an eloquent passage, Mannheim described the type of individual he envisaged:

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 243.

The important element in this conception of integrative behaviour is that the person who acts in its spirit is not only unwilling to superimpose his own view and will upon the other fellow...but he is tolerant of disagreement. He is tolerant not for the sake of compromise, but in the expectation of enlarging his own personality by absorbing some features of a human being essentially different from himself. Practically, this means that the democratic personality welcomes disagreement because it has the courage to expose itself to change.⁵⁰

Hence, democratic behaviour is characterized by open-mindedness and a readiness for cooperation, thereby enabling the individual to enrich his personality by assimilating differing ideas.

This democratic ideal, Mannheim contrasted with the authoritarian personality. Inherent in authoritarian relationship is the idea of hierarchy. Some have a higher status than others and are, therefore, more concerned with maintaining that status than in learning from others. The status-ridden type draws his strength and confidence from this pre-established position. He is unable to bear criticism or the strain of real discussion,

as sooner or later the validity of his alleged superiority will be questioned by both. For him discussion is just a form of propaganda and indirect domination, propaganda being nothing but a method of breaking a person's will through psychological coercion.⁵¹

Such an attitude is incompatible with democracy. Thus it is time, asserted Mannheim, that the person in a democratic environment, who found security in his inherited status, emancipate himself from this crutch.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 201.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 231.

From this, it was an easy step for Mannheim to demonstrate that this objective could best be achieved by changing the everyday relationships of man. "The idea of shared responsibility, shared controls, and accountability"⁵² must penetrate every sphere of our social life. Only by changing the context of our social system can we truly create the "democratic personality".

While Mannheim believed that everything in society has an educational function, he laid special stress on education, work and leisure, and religion as the three areas of life which probably play the greatest role in shaping the individual's personality. Each of these will now be discussed in turn.

In his appraisal of education, Mannheim called for a new approach to its role in society and, in addition, a rethinking of our whole attitude to learning. In particular a new understanding of the social function of the school must be sought, for the school provides

a focus for otherwise unrelated educational activities. The school may thus perform its special task by intensifying and systematizing social experience--a function that the various compartments of social life can hardly perform. The school can do this only if it is no longer regarded as an institution in which we spend only our early years, but as servicing in one way or another the whole social system and adult life.⁵³

While it is mandatory that we do our best to revivify or replace the primary groups of family, neighbourhood, factory

⁵² Ibid., p. 232.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 247.

and church, the school must face the harsh reality that it will have to take over functions that other social institutions have neglected or are unable to discharge. As the hold of the family, factory and community weakens, the school will have to become more like a factory, more like the community, and more like a family in order to adequately cope with its tasks.

Mannheim was also concerned with, what he believed to be, a decline of the spirit of inquiry in education fostered by the trend to bureaucracy. The increasing scale of social organizations necessitate the rational recruitment of skilled personnel, and this means vocational and professional training through mass education. The difficulty is to resist the accompanying tendency to specialize and standardize instruction, jeopardizing the impulse to question and inquire.

Mannheim ardently believed that somehow we must keep this impulse alive and advocated, therefore, education for spontaneity in the schools--the reorganization of curricula, and methods of work and discipline along "progressive" lines. He also had two suggestions to offer for a later stage: firstly, the nature and function of adult education should be drastically revised.⁵⁴ It should cease to be a substitute for higher education for labourers and white-collar workers. Instead it should play the same part in relation to these people's lives as do the universities in relation to the

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 253 ff.

learned professions. Adult education should provide post-education and re-education to enable people to keep abreast, whatever their walk of life, with swiftly moving social and technical change. Above all, it should encourage self-education, and this should no longer be merely intellectual but also religious and artistic. Mannheim found support and nourishment for his ideas on this point from Herbert Read, and he even envisaged "settlements and colonies where artists and labourers mix,"⁵⁵ from which new forms of self-expression and new valuations of work and leisure will emerge.

Within the universities, which of course must be greatly expanded, Mannheim advocated that liberal education be made the core of the curriculum. As one might expect, this core will be composed of the social sciences with sociology fulfilling a synthetic function in such inter-departmental teaching. Specialized training will then be related to, and oriented around, this core. The objective will be to give the student some "sound ideas about man's place in nature and society."⁵⁶

Mannheim's planning also extended to the areas of work and leisure. Modern industrial society with its specialization of labour and automation has reduced work to a monotonous and often demeaning grind. Work becomes drudgery, producing in the worker a feeling of emptiness and a vague frustration.

⁵⁵ Man and Society, p. 354.

⁵⁶ Freedom, p. 259.

Because our whole way of life is built on industrialization and the division of labour, Mannheim seemed to hold little hope that work itself could be made meaningful. Except for suggesting that rewards other than pecuniary ones be made available, such as prestige, fame, and authority, Mannheim entertained few illusions that work in an industrial culture might be made either interesting or satisfying. Instead, Mannheim suggested that the center of gravity for many people had now shifted to leisure and play. Mannheim aptly summarized these developments in the following passage:

The mechanization of industry and its schematized routines deny creative outlets and personal initiative to the many, and demand compensation in leisure-time pursuits. Leisure, besides being the natural balance to man's work, becomes increasingly the place for personality development and self-expression. While pre-industrial societies shaped individuals at their work, impersonal work in a machine age has lost this function, which is now confined to leisure-time pursuits.... For the majority, leisure instead of work has become the road to civilization. ⁵⁷

However, in the past leisure was spent in traditionally established ways. Work, moreover, was individual and satisfying, and leisure did not have to absorb all man's creative energies. Today, everything is changed. The urbanization of life has disrupted our traditional patterns of leisure. The individual is left to his own devices in his quest for recreation. However, since businessmen abhor a vacuum, our age has seen the commercialization of leisure. As Mannheim wrote in

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 269.

an angry passage:

Hollywood and other profit interests dictate the taste of the masses. This also is planning, even large-scale planning, and as long as this is done by business for business and not by public authorities for the good of the community, Liberalism does not object.... Little concerned with educational and spiritual consequences, business tends to appeal to the lowest appetites if it is profitable to do so. ⁵⁸

The quality of leisure is reduced to the lowest common denominator.

The obvious solution to this, Mannheim believed, is the expansion of subsidized and non-commercial leisure-time activities and cultural pursuits. Once the broader public has become acquainted with such higher forms of enjoyment and relaxation, Mannheim felt confident that democratic citizens would utilize and appreciate such opportunities. In this way, in a period of expanding leisure, man's energies will find a creative and cultural outlet, converting otherwise destructive energies into constructive ones.

In his last writings, Mannheim assigned to religion, freed from its authoritarian and superstitious elements, the task of a fundamental integration of all human activities. For the regeneration of man and society must ultimately be based on a transcendental spiritual foundation. While intelligent planning can provide the structural configurations conducive to man's happiness, there exists in the human mind a

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 271.

basic need for certainty and meaning. Mannheim recognized that only through satisfaction of these deep-rooted aspirations (that there is a Purpose in what we are doing, and that there is a Personal Power to whom man can appeal) can man develop the sense of belonging in a world where he can find his place and where there is an order that supports him and dispels his anxieties.⁵⁹

In an age of transition, uprooting, dehumanization, moral chaos, meaningless and blind frustration, man demands the inspiration and vision that only religion can provide. As envisaged by Mannheim, the religion in the new order will not only lay down general principles, but it will also recommend "concrete patterns of behaviour, the image of satisfactory social institutions and a whole world view as a connecting link between them."⁶⁰ As long as they are not dictated rules enforced by a minority, but are meant

as the fruits of creative imagination put at the disposal of those who crave for a consistent way of life, there is not only no harm in them, but they actually fulfill a function without which modern society cannot survive.⁶¹

The place of religion under the planned order, as envisaged by Mannheim, does not imply the medieval pattern of clericalism or the totalitarian imposition of an alien creed. Planning for religion simply means that free scope is left for religion to permeate the whole of life. Mannheim took strong exception to his earlier position that the problem of right behaviour is solved simply by successful adjustment. Efficiency cannot

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 289. ⁶⁰ Diagnosis, p. 120. ⁶¹ Ibid., p. 121.

serve as a valid criteria; for when regulations and values are considered solely as means, their ends are invariably lost sight of.

In other words, the justification of a type of behaviour as being an efficient piece of adjustment to a given situation does not determine its being right or wrong from a Christian or a non-Christian point of view.⁶²

Notwithstanding, up to his last day, Mannheim continued to expect from sociology, "perhaps the most secularized approach to the problems of human life,"⁶³ the answer to "how far the variability of social phenomena including the prevailing valuations are functions of the changing social process."⁶⁴

In fact, just before his death, Mannheim seemed to be considering, in a manner reminiscent of Comte, the possibility that sociology might provide the ultimate basis of a new social religion in the planned society.

Mannheim's grandiose design for a planned society is a curious mixture of the commonplace and the visionary. While he was very clear about objectives, details of how they could be achieved are sparse. Instead he tried to indicate the key areas which required a rational analysis--economics, consensus, the nature and influence of elites, individual and group values, massification, education, work and leisure, religion and the meaning of freedom. What the content of the changes would be, how they should be brought about in any situation, he did not

⁶² Ibid., p. 145.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 126.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

often try to specify in any detail.

Nevertheless, it should be clear from the foregoing that planning, for Mannheim, was a corrective to the impersonal and chaotic workings of the dynamic forces of society, rather than a culmination of the trend towards collectivism.

Sustained by the vision of a rational society, Mannheim was also inspired by a belief that man could remake himself through managing his total environment. The world was to be an order of reason, and man the autonomous subject of his own development.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION

Men commit the error of not knowing when to limit their hopes.--Nicolo Machiavelli

As Mannheim himself freely admitted, his writings are not noted for their logical consistency; instead his method represented another approach. Mannheim's form of presentation was to center on a unitary problem and penetrate its inmost secrets. He would explore the question from all angles and for every possibility in order to expose all the contradictions and variations inherent in the idea. No attempt was made to reconcile or harmonize divergent conceptions. The complexities, the possibilities latent in an idea were permitted to come to full expression and were submitted to the judgment of the reader. While it is testimony to Mannheim's intellectual honesty, such an approach is an irritating source of discomfort to the systematizer and to anyone attempting to integrate his work into a coherent whole.

Hence, in Mannheim's diagnosis of contemporary society, four hypotheses can clearly be isolated in his writings.¹

However, his formulation of the theory of mass society is more complex than most writers have been willing to concede.² Central to the theory is the loss of community caused by the destruction of tradition and the sterilization of all groups and statuses that provided identification and membership for the member of society. This spiritual and cultural vacuum is the seedbed for the rise of an undifferentiated, unattached soulless mass. This dismal picture clearly refers to, what Mannheim termed, the transition from the "parochial world of small groups"³ into the mass society. The disintegration of the social fabric and the uprooting of the individual is the crux of Mannheim's first hypothesis.

The bureaucratization of life with the increased scale

¹ Cf. Chapter III. These hypotheses were never explicitly related to each other by Mannheim, nor did he ever claim that they represented the last word on the evolution of society. However, the sincerity of his concern and the depth of his analysis is acknowledged by all those motivated by an interest in mankind. For instance, C. Wright Mills, one of America's foremost sociologists described Mannheim's discussion of rationality as containing "the seeds of the most profound criticism of the secular rationalism of Western civilization." Cf. C. Wright Mills (ed.), Images of Man (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1960), p. 12.

² Cf. William Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society (Glencoe: the Free Press, 1959) and Daniel Bell, The End of Ideology (New York: Collier Books, 1961). It is strange that Kornhauser singled out Mannheim's discourse on the loss of exclusiveness of elites as being most relevant to the mass society while Bell concentrated on Mannheim's discussion of rationality. Neither, however, provides a comprehensive discussion of Mannheim's theories.

³ Freedom, p. 4.

and centralization of the structure of decision is another facet of Mannheim's delineation of the mass society. This loss of any structural view or position is the second aspect of the loss of community. The contemporary fetish for hugeness and efficiency has created idiots of specialization. Man becomes a disembodied hand or brain, directed to the performance of narrow specialized tasks. Unable to understand what is going on around him, man loses the will for rationally considered decision and action simply because he does not possess the instruments for such decision and action. The fragmented individual, therefore, comes to rely upon and is helplessly exposed to the suggestions and manipulations that flow from the mass media. In times of crisis and dislocation the submissive mass is likely to become active and the genius of totalitarian leadership has lain in its ability to capitalize on such moral upheaval.

This theory of the over-organization of society has several important implications which Mannheim never investigated. If the rationalization of life has paradoxically reduced man's ability to make rational decisions; and if, therefore, he must become increasingly more passive and helpless before the manipulators of the mass media, the public has lost its genuine autonomy and is naked before the pressure and control of the elites. Man's life is ordered in conformity with external routines. He loses his independence and more importantly, he even loses his desire to be independent. Man

ceases to experience himself as a real being and is manipulated⁴ by forces outside himself. As C. Wright Mills has pointed out, the media tell the man in the mass who he is and what he wants to be. They provide him with new identities and new aspirations. Hence, while authority ostensibly resides in the people, the power of initiation is, in fact, held by an elite. As Mannheim neglected and as Mills demonstrated, "the idea of a mass society suggests the idea of an elite of power."⁵ While Mannheim never actually articulated the logical implications of his conception of the over-formalization of life, the existence of an elite is the dialectical counterpoint to the emergence of the mass. For the helpless exposure of the mass to outside forces necessarily implies the existence of a controlling elite. According to this version of the theory of a mass society, the main danger to freedom and the political order is the vulnerability of masses to domination by elites. This loss of insulation of non-elites and the rise of elites bent on total mobilization of the population, Kornhauser⁶ characterized as "the democratic criticism of mass society." C. Wright Mills, E.H. Carr and Hannah Arendt are notable exponents of such a view, and it can be argued, that Mannheim

⁴ C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 314.

⁵ Ibid., p. 323.

⁶ Kornhauser, op. cit., p. 21.

also belongs in the above list. Given the creation of a frustrated irrational mass and concomitant susceptibility to elite domination, Mannheim would seem to hold, in common with the others, the belief that the atomization of society and the rise of elites capable of mobilizing isolated and unattached people is an essential feature of the mass society. The central idea of these democratic theorists is that the preservation of critical values (especially freedom) requires the insulation of the independent group life of the non-elite from domination by elites.

Counterposed to this theory, is what Kornhauser called "the aristocratic criticism of mass society."⁷ Such thinkers as Ortega y Gasset, T. S. Eliot, Walter Lippman, and of course Mannheim fall under this heading. This "aristocratic" criticism asserts that the primary cause of mass politics lies in the loss of exclusiveness of elites as a result of the rise of popular participation in the critical areas of society. The term "mass" does not actually refer to a group of persons, but to the low quality of modern civilization resulting from the loss of commanding position by the elite. Aristocratic theorists assume that whenever the masses are allowed to participate in the shaping of social policies, they will do so in a destructive manner. Thus Lippman, for example, has written:⁸"While mass

⁷ Ibid.

opinion dominates the government, there is a morbid derangement of the true functions of power. The derangement brings about the enfeeblement, verging on paralysis, of the capacity to govern.⁸ Hence, "aristocratic" critics attribute

loss of liberty to the rise of popular participation in areas previously limited to the specially qualified.... Democratic critics, in their turn, attribute loss of liberty to the rise of mass manipulation and mobilization in areas previously left to the privacy of the individual and the group.... In short, one conception views mass society as unlimited democracy..., the other as unlimited tyranny.⁹

However, to adequately describe reality, a combination of these two theories is necessary.

Clearly, the mass society is predicated upon the availability of non-elites for mobilization. Moreover, Kornhauser has suggested three reasons why high access to elites must also be present.¹⁰ Firstly, for available masses to be mobilized at all, the agents of mobilization must have access to the means of communication and power or else they will not be able to seize the opportunity provided by the existence of the mass.

Secondly, the success of totalitarian movements is contingent upon the vulnerability of existing elites. When access is low, elites are, therefore, relatively immune to popular pressures, so that the mass movement will eventually

⁸ Walter Lippman, The Public Philosophy (New York: Mentor Books, 1956), p. 19.

⁹ Kornhauser, op. cit., p. 31. ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

die out.

Thirdly, established elites, because of tradition, values or inertia, lack the will and capacity to mobilize a large population, except in times of crisis when the social order is threatened. Hence, it is the counter-elites who are inexorably drawn to the masses, since this is the only way to gain power in the mass society.

We may conclude, therefore, that the rise of mass movements is dependent both upon elites being readily accessible to influence by non-elites and non-elites being readily available for mobilization by elites. Each conception of mass society requires the other for its completion.

Although never clearly articulated, Mannheim also seemed to embrace such a view. His theory of the mass as a bureaucratized society yields the idea of available non-elites and his critique of "fundamental democratization" yields the idea of accessible elites. This integrated theory of mass society locates the cause of mass politics in the condition of both elites and non-elites and, although these phrases are names for extreme types, they point to certain essential features of reality. But it is always a question of degree, in the extent to which an actual society corresponds in explicit dimensions to a mass society.

Although, as seen above, one aspect of Mannheim's theory of the mass society does tend to stress the way in which mass

participation undermines elite functions, he was deeply committed to the preservation of democratic values. In fact, after his move to England in 1933, Mannheim turned from the fine points of diagnosis to the active political problem of preventing the descent into disaster. He increasingly became preoccupied with the creation of conditions favourable to the preservation and enhancement of our Western political heritage.

Mannheim's theory of planning was born of honest revolt. Appalled by the evils around him, and by the rise of a new barbarism, Mannheim determined that major changes in our social life were mandatory. The intellectual's dread of utopianism, his pious desire to appear realistic at all times was foreign to Mannheim's nature. Mannheim refused to be cowed by the vastness of a problem or the dangers involved. Hence, in a delightful poke at the social scientists, he wrote: "The forced imposition of mathematical and mensurative methods has gradually led to a situation in which certain sciences no longer ask what is worth knowing but regard as worth knowing only what is measurable."¹¹ And he went on in a footnote: "Thus, many empirical investigations in the social sciences are made merely because the data are at hand, and not because the investigators are faced with problems which they are seeking to solve."¹² This impatience of Mannheim's and his prod-

¹¹ Man and Society, p. 185.

¹² Ibid.

gious faith in man's reason led him to assert that the world must be made over in accordance with the dictates of reason. In fact, his experiences inculcated a belief that this was the only alternative to chaos and the collapse of all civilized values. While his dogmatic dismissal of an evolving capitalism was, perhaps, too facile and somewhat hasty, the contemporary trend to centralization of institutions and the concentration of decision-making, does lend credence to his statement that there is no longer any choice between planning and not planning, but only a choice "between good planning and bad."¹³

Planning, for Mannheim, was essentially the "rational mastery of the irrational."¹⁴ This could be regarded as taking place on three levels.

Firstly, Mannheim wished to bring to the level of awareness, the origin of man's knowledge. Believing that all knowledge is socially determined, Mannheim wished to make people cognizant of this fact. Only by exposing the irrational origins of our thought could we be enabled to intelligently master and control our attitudes and mental processes.

Secondly, Mannheim wished to dispense with the forces which produce unforeseen results and to replace the anonymous mechanism of the market by collective conscious direction of all social forces to achieve deliberately chosen goals. "We

¹³ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 267.

have never had to set up and direct," wrote Mannheim, "the entire system of nature as completely as we are forced to do today with our society."¹⁵

Thirdly, although we have vastly augmented our powers through the development of social techniques, we have not yet, in fact, developed the capacity to control those powers in any proportionate degree. The necessity to restore our capacity as self-governing persons, Mannheim regarded as an obvious priority, in order that man be enabled to remake life in accordance with his own desires.

To lift human destiny out of the hands of chance, as Mannheim wished to do,^{and} make it secure and scientific presupposes an ultra-rationalistic claim that there is no mystery either in man, in history, or in the universe that we cannot fathom, examine and learn to manipulate and control. Mannheim's faith in the possibilities of applied sociology and psychology as the basis for his planning was obsessional. As A. D. Lindsay, who knew him well, remarked:

Mannheim always resisted very strongly any suggestion that there was a limit to sociological knowledge, any suggestion that legislation, like moral action was partly a leap in the dark. One always felt that he had a sociological faith that all these planks of ignorance about society could be overcome.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁶ In an illuminating review (published posthumously) of Freedom in the British Journal of Sociology, III (March 1952), p. 86. In the course of the same review Lindsay remarked, "I

Whether there does in fact exist at present (or could in the future) a science which would enable Mannheim's planners to do what he would have them do is grounds for obvious doubt. Mannheim's claim for an ultimate, limitless social science, (his sociological "imperialism"), strains the credulity of most readers.

Karl Popper, an avowed critic of Mannheim, in his Poverty of Historicism, devoted an interesting chapter to the "holistic or Utopian social engineering" which aims at "remodelling the whole of society in accordance with a definite plan or blueprint."¹⁷ Popper argued that, in reality, ~~social~~ ^{utopian} engineering defeats its own purpose because "the greater the holistic changes attempted, the greater are their unintended and largely unexpected repercussions, forcing upon the holistic engineer the expedient of piecemeal improvisation."¹⁸ From defeat to defeat, the holistic social engineer will be led "to extend his programme so as to embrace not only the transformation of society...but also the transformation of man."¹⁹ And, in fact, this is what Mannheim actually envisaged: "The political problem," Mannheim wrote, "is to organize human im-

don't think planning of the kind that Mannheim wanted could be called democratic planning, though it might be called planning for democracy".

¹⁷ Karl Popper, The Poverty of Historicism (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957), p. 67.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 68.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 70.

pulses in such a way that they will direct their energy to the right strategic points, and steer the total process of development in the desired direction."²⁰

As Popper rightly pointed out, this programme "substitutes for the demand that we build a new society fit for men and women to live in, the demand that we mould these men and women fit²¹ to/into this new society." In other words, according to Popper, the manipulation that Mannheim foresees would no longer have human beings for its objects, but mechanized robots. Although an eminent logician, Popper has missed the real point. Mannheim's demand should be interpreted as meaning that the reconstruction of society will involve action on two levels: the creation of an institutional framework and, since this is not sufficient, the molding--scientific direction, economic planning, vocational orientation and social conditioning--of the future citizen.

This type of planning, however, Hayek has argued inexorably leads us down the slippery path to totalitarianism. He takes strong exception to the following argument of Mannheim's:

The only way in which a planned society differs from that of the nineteenth century is that more and more spheres of social life, and ultimately each and all of them, are subjected to state control. But if a few controls can be held in check by parliamentary sovereignty, so can many.... In a democratic state sovereignty can be boundlessly strengthened by plenary powers without renouncing

²⁰ Man and Society, pp. 199-200.

²¹ Popper, loc. cit.

democratic control.²²

²³ Hayek has suggested that this view is an extremely myopic one. It overlooks the fundamental distinction that while conformity can be imposed, agreement cannot. And to obtain a voluntary consensus on the objectives and methods of a comprehensive plan, Hayek claimed, is impossible. In most fields, things must be left to chance. Extensive social planning, in this view, is inherently synonymous with uncompromising cultural conformity. However, as Mannheim has remarked, it is possible to "coordinate the time-tables of the different railway lines without controlling the topics of conversation inside the carriages."²⁴ In other words, power can be exercised in different ways and for a variety of ends. Hayek's prediction that planning must inevitably lead to mechanical regimentation and the extirpation of freedom is, therefore, unfounded, or, at least, unproven.

Another, more subtle argument is that the very concept of a plan implies continuity of control. You cannot rotate the planners every little while, tear up their plan, "and stick in somebody else with a different idea of what should be done and or how it should be done."²⁵ The disruption would be

²² Man and Society, pp. 340-341.

²³ Friedrich A. Hayek, The Road to Serfdom (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), pp. 68-69.

²⁴ Diagnosis, p. 113.

²⁵ Max Eastman, The Failure of Socialism (New York: Grosset & Dunlop, 1962), p. 27.

catastrophic. And yet political freedom would seem to involve the ability to do just that. Mannheim recognized this problem, but he believed that because problems were so pressing and dangers so imminent, all people would be able to agree on minimum goals such as the elimination of the business cycle, etc. While this is probably true (although many might disagree as to methods) the planning envisaged by Mannheim was more ambitious in scope. Moreover, nothing can alter the fact that we cannot both make effective long-term plans, and continually exercise the right to change our minds about anything at any time. To this argument, Mannheim made no answer and, indeed, there is no answer to give.

Although much of Mannheim's writings is devoted to an elaboration of his conception of planning, there is a surprising paucity of detail on the actual practice. Mannheim believed it was sufficient to limit himself to a kind of general vision of the society he wished to build. However, as one of his reviewers has pointed out:

It is precisely the complicated and frequently dull task of discovering specific means to the 'general vision' that is now shown to be of vital importance. The prescription of general goals, or even of general means, is not enough. For a loose description of techniques either remains little more than an injunction to do those things that will achieve the goal and avoid those things that will not; or else its generalities conceal all the concrete problems.²⁶

²⁶ Robert A. Dahl, "Review of Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning", American Sociological Review, XV (Dec., 1950), p. 808.

Mannheim betrayed both weaknesses. However, it can be argued that the world moves too rapidly to prescribe ends and means too finely. Mannheim's policy of elaborating general principles gives his work an enduring quality which a more political effort would have lacked.

Imbued with a touching belief in progress and human intelligence, Mannheim was far more naive than he imagined the men of the Enlightenment to have been. They at least, were aware of the modest effect that philosophical and scientific reasoning exert on the social process with its human prejudices, conviction and interests. Such humility, however, was not part of Mannheim's make-up. Inspired with a messianic attitude, Mannheim believed that the sociologist could persuade collective institutions, by scientific reasoning, that they must yield their monopolistic control to the social scientists. In fact, Mannheim's planners take on an almost metaphysical air. "They are, as it were, pure mind incarnate", acutely observed one commentator. "His hope that they will be brought to the levers of control seems to rest on a vestigial faith that, in the Western democracies at least, the socio-historical process may, after all, still be moving in the right direction."²⁷

In the society of the future, as Mannheim imagined it, the unpredictable will be abolished, conflicts eliminated,

²⁷ Benjamin Schwartz, "The Socio-Historic Approach", World Politics, VIII (Oct., 1955), p. 139.

interests harmonized, and in Marx's famous formulation, man will move "from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom." Indeed, man will become as securely entrenched in the governance of his world as he had once acknowledged God to have been. Even nature, once thought to fall under God's province, is taken from Him and absorbed into society. Hence, Mannheim wrote:

With the gradual integration of unplanned events into a planned society an important stage in the technical control of nature is reached. The newly controlled provinces of nature lose their original character and become functional parts of the social process.²⁸

Similarly, where God assumed the terrifying responsibility for man's creation, man has now taken it upon himself to prescribe the human personality desired. Mannheim believed (with much justification) that we have now reached the point when the plasticity of human behaviour and control of the "key positions" must mean that men will consciously attempt to recreate Man. While the Communists have tried it and failed, Mannheim believed that it is premature to say that the attempt must always fail; for our techniques and knowledge are constantly increasing. As Dahl rather ironically commented: "George Orwell's 1984 may have a poor title; but what we dislike about it may be mostly a matter of the date."²⁹

Actually, Mannheim seemed to believe that if we could

28 Man and Society, p. 155. 29 Dahl, op. cit., p. 809.

create a well-organized society, its beneficent qualities would eventually rub off on the individual, enlightening his irrationality and shaping his personality, with the expected result that the "good" community would cajole, educate and sensitize the recalcitrant individual into becoming a cooperative and virtuous citizen.³⁰ Mannheim envisaged a social science manipulation of the environment to spontaneously obtain from the individual the desired behaviour.

But there is a point in which a planning which operates on the nature of man raises the question whether the power of the conditioners over the conditioned is not the same as leaving the latter at the mercy of the former. Or in Hayek's words, the freedom Mannheim "offers us is not the freedom of the members of society but the unlimited freedom of the planner to do with society what he pleases."³¹ Mannheim, himself, was aware of this danger and answering to the question "Who plans those who do the planning?" he avowed: "The longer I reflect on this question, the more it haunts me."³² Although Mannheim's commitment to the values of individuality and freedom are beyond doubt, it can be argued that all that seems to emerge from his planning for freedom is a more subtle totalitarianism

³⁰ Mannheim's belief that a moral society will produce moral individuals is strikingly reminiscent of Rousseau's dictum that "man will be forced to be free."

³¹ Hayek, op. cit. p. 158. ³² Man and Society, p. 74.

in which men will not realize that they are being manipulated. For as C. S. Lewis aptly put it, in the final analysis "the power of Man to make himself what he pleases means...the power of some men to make other men what they please."³³

However, two factors militate against taking too extreme a position on the dangers of planning as envisaged by Mannheim. Firstly, there is a vast difference between the type of planning that seeks to enmesh the individual in a network of detailed rules thereby reducing the individual to the status of a robot functioning in a prescribed way, and the type of planning that is concerned with the creation of a political and economic context within which the spontaneity and freedom of the individual is allowed full play. The latter type of planning is that envisaged by Mannheim while the former is not. Of course, such decentralization goes against the tendency of the whole history of modern economic, educational and political administration and raises problems of organization that are immense. While Mannheim recognized this, he refused to be daunted; for he felt that the cult of business and the problems of mechanization and dehumanization involved questions of deepest significance for the human spirit.

It is obvious [Mannheim wrote] that the modern nature of social techniques puts a premium on centralization, but this is only true if our sole criterion is to be technical efficiency. If, for various reasons, chiefly those concerned

³³ C. S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man (New York: Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 37.

with the maintenance of personality, we deliberately wish to decentralize certain activities within certain limits, we can do so.³⁴

In addition to this fact (that the goals of planning are humanistic and are directed to the enlargement of freedom), it should also be remembered that the planners will remain responsive to democratic majorities. Opposition will still exist and criticism will be encouraged. In the last analysis, under a planned society (as in our contemporary democracies) the existence of freedom will depend upon the sense of responsibility, alertness and activity possessed by its citizens. The final safeguard of our freedom will still reside in the democratic spirit and vigilance of the people.

What is perhaps the most frightening aspect of Mannheim's theoretical constructions is his ultimate concern to salvage history, to establish on earth the reign of perfection. For Mannheim foresaw "that at a later stage all that we now call history, namely the unforeseeable, fateful dominance of un-³⁵controlled social forces, will come to an end." "The age of planning will be followed by one of mere administration."³⁶ Mankind, put in complete control of its destiny, will reach a

³⁴ Man and Society, p. 319.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 193.

³⁶ Ibid. This statement echoes Engel's famous formulation on the same subject, when he predicted that "the government of persons will be replaced by the administration of things." However this writer concurs with A. D. Lindsay when he wrote, in the same review quoted on page 123, that Mannheim "doesn't convince me that politicians are unnecessary if only you provide enough sociologists."

state of perfection and the history of human beings will yield to the chronicle of divinity. There will be established on earth the dominion of unselfishness and permanent peace. The human journey will come to an end and the millenium will be ushered in. One can only hope that such a state of static perfection will not soon be achieved. With the cessation of the conflict of ideas and with the immobilization of change will go all that makes life challenging and meaningful.

Perhaps the most profound criticism that can be levelled at Mannheim is his method of depriving all phenomena of their original character and forcing them into a sociological functionalism. Everything is reduced to its functional position in the social process. For instance, for all Mannheim's concern for the vitality and relevance of religion, one gets the impression that it was motivated primarily by an interest in it as a function of social life. Such a deification of the scientific approach is unlikely to be capable of motivating the principles of freedom and human dignity which constituted the goal of Mannheim's total socio-psychological theory of planning. It is doubtful if sociological or psychological techniques of planning are of any avail if they do not create a frame of reference in which living and dying have some meaning.

However, Mannheim did squarely face some of mankind's most fundamental problems. Palliatives or political fads of the moment failed to catch his imagination. To nationalize or

not to nationalize was not of basic importance to Mannheim. Man's relationship to man constituted his ultimate preoccupation and excited his chief concern. The shallowness of the New Deal and the British Labour Party's postwar regime is shown by their failure to improve any of the important things in people's lives--their work relationships, the way they spend their leisure, education, and culture. Mannheim, however, tackled all these problems and whether one agrees with the solutions he proposed, the intensity of his concern, and the honesty of his approach cannot be questioned. In a world caught up in a travail of superficialities or in tendentious polemics, the radical preoccupations (in the sense of going to the root of the matter) of a man like Mannheim must exert a beneficent influence. His contribution to the attempt to create communities where individuals can live together as variegated human beings instead of as impersonal units in a mass sum is both refreshing and profound.

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