

April 17, 1970

Letter to the editor:

People don't have to be destroyed in Viet Nam, -- or in Cambodia, -- or in Laos. We don't have to have runaway inflation or unemployment. We don't have to have the black people in our society segregated into depressed ghetto houses and schools. Our civilization doesn't have to collapse and disintegrate like ancient Greece and Rome.

In fact our civilization has had sufficient information and social understanding as far back as 1941 to be able to evolve to the next stage in social evolution, instead of collapsing like most previous civilizations have collapsed.

I am disappointed with the new-left radicals among the students who protest, but don't seem to have a plan of what to do about our disintegrating civilization. But perhaps the education they have had to date has screened from them the more significant features of how civilization evolves. Some years ago I contributed some manuscripts on the potential use of cybernetics in solving the problems of our society to the University of California Library, but the material was rejected. They didn't want students to be confused by my analyses. Later I sent important material on the nature of the problems of our society to the President of the University of California but received no significant feedback. Then the California Alumni Association lost my name from their files during an abortive update of a magnetic tape.

I am surprised that there are not more violent students in this civilization of ours that goes to such lengths to compartmentalize knowledge and to prevent communication between different fields. While I am disappointed with the university students who don't find their way through the inhibiting maze of specialization, my feelings turn to anger when I think of the university presidents, chancellors, and deans who are supposed to be more mature and surely have great wisdom and knowledge. I have deep anger at the administrators of the universities who don't utilize the great knowledge of social evolution that gathers dust on the library shelves. I am also angry that they don't try to put together the specialized segments of knowledge that exist in various departments at the university, that when pieced together would give our civilization a viable set of working hypotheses with which to steer our society through this syzygy of transition point in three interacting forces of technological evolution, bio-social evolution, and scientific-philosophical-ethical evolution.

I find that my anger at the university administrators doesn't accomplish anything, so I must go deeper to the roots of the problems. I find that there is valuable material in the American Handbook of Psychiatry on social evolution, technological evolution and cybernetics which practically no psychiatrist has bothered to read. There is valuable material in economics that is normally taught only to specialized graduate students who have been conditioned to be obedient eunuchs -- capable of being the harem guards of the obscure statistics of our economic system.

There are valuable studies in sociology from which one could have predicted the major social crises in our civilization, if one was not picking the topics for social research with a view to getting promoted. There are valuable computer simulations of social systems which are developed in electrical engineering and computer science departments, but which the sociologists and economists ignore.

Norbert Wiener may have antagonized some university department heads by his definition of cybernetics, but I would rather have a chance to live in a civilization that has a chance to survive, than succeed in preserving a department of high specialization as our civilization collapses.

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