

**ROBERT CLANCY**

One of the anomalies of our present-day civilization is that better and better means are being devised for saying less and less.

Take the most obvious cases—the mass media of television, radio, movies, the press. Now that Demosthenes is no longer confined to the Agora, why does he not speak? Now that Shakespeare can expand beyond the cramped confines of the Globe Theatre, why doesn't he write any more? Now that Beethoven can be heard in high-fidelity in everyone's parlor, why is his pen silent?

The great creative minds still alive are nearly all in their old age. If any new ones are developing, they're certainly steering clear (or being steered clear) of the mass media!

Meanwhile what we're getting sped to us in F.M. and A.M. are the weak uncertain voices of confused minds, or the rantings of demagogues, or the latest flabby love-ditty warbled by the latest favorite warbler. And on the wide screen in stereophonic sound there is spread before us three-dimensional bathos, banality and boredom.

Nor does the situation with respect to leadership and creativity look any better in industry or government. The big firms, becoming conscious of a dearth of talent and new ideas, are perfecting their techniques to the utmost to encourage the flowering of genius. But still no Edison or Steinmetz! Just a host of dutiful plumbers fiddling over machines that will make thinking less necessary. And not much doing on the top level, either. All is formula, anonymity, "line and staff."

And in government, more mediocrity. Bureaus take the place of statesmen, red tape takes the place of intelligent action. The smooth printing presses, the well-oiled electric mimeograph machines are pouring out carloads of statistics and stuff—but nothing resembling a Magna Carta or a Bill of Rights.

Has too much attention been paid to polishing up the machines—and too little to the expression of the human spirit? Is the development of creative talent an elusive thing beyond any summoning, beyond any formula of encouragement?

Or can it be that *Liberty*, fully trusted, fully restored, will again bring to us the fruits of genius?