



Review
and
Reflection

BY

ROBERT CLANCY

THE GENERATION GAP

"DON'T TRUST anyone over forty." That is the watchword of today's youth. And the over-thirties stand by in amazement as the youngsters hold the stage.

Bewildered parents do not know their own children, and do not understand why they behave as they do. There appears to be a widespread youth rebellion against all that established society has stood for, a discarding of traditional religion and morality, a rejection of parental values.

There has been a generation gap since time began. The discrepancy between "youth and crabbed age" is nothing new. Indeed, every trend in society is but an intensification of some latent quality already there. But the current break between younger and older folks seems much more intense than usual that we are prompted to wonder why.

The situation is startlingly different from that of the 1950s, at least in America. In those days, the great thing was to be a graduate of an Ivy League university, to wear a trim charcoal suit with a crew haircut, and to work in advertising on Madison Avenue. "Conformity" and "non-involvement" were the criticisms leveled at youth then. A decade later, these young people are now the over-thirties who are not trusted by today's young. The Ivy League is a shambles, gaudy and floppy clothes are worn, hair is long, and Madison Avenue is jeered at.

True, trends in America are difficult to fathom, they don't stay long, and things often swing from one extreme to another. But we are still confronted with the puzzle of how the current trend came about.

If we go back a generation or so, we will find that the supports of family and morality were not so very strong after all. They had been eroded for some time under the stormy weather of the twentieth century. The "new morality" has been around since at least the 1920s.

The parents of today's youth have, as a rule, some painful memories of the Great Depression. Their attitudes have been largely formed by it. The most important thing then was to rise above the threat of economic insecurity. A frequent quarrel between father and son today is that son does not realize how

father worked, and how the value of money should be respected; and conversely, that father measures everything by money, and that son wants something more.

Here may be a key to the problem. While parents were concentrating on lifting themselves economically, on exorcising the spectre of want, their young ones were growing up with material goods tossed at them while they may have hungered for more guidance and human contact. In time, of course, they will realise one must have the wherewithal to get the things one needs. But meanwhile, they feel the lack of inner needs that were neglected.

The thought is indeed repulsive that in order to attain material success, one must dedicate oneself to it so completely that there is not the time for human values. If society asks this price, it is too high, and it is commendable that youth senses it is wrong. Although their attitude is often confused and extreme, they are groping for some right things.

Today's youth is becoming involved in social issues, whereas in the 1950s it was considered foolish to be "taken in" by such concerns. According to a recent survey, the majority of college students feel that there is injustice in the distribution of wealth and power.

This is a good start, but unfortunately it leaves young people prey to left-wing ideologies—even in the extreme form of Maoism—that jump into the vacuum left by parents and teachers.

Old liberals and radicals who were themselves "young Turks" in the 1930s are exasperated with today's youth, and they chide and exhort it to be not merely destructive but constructive. But somehow they are not on the wavelength. Youngsters simply do not believe the pious exhortations of oldsters whom they blame for the mess the world is in.

It should not be at all that difficult to reach today's young people, who are, after all, human beings. Two of the phrases they have contributed to the language are "doing your own thing" and "being where it's at." These are very basic human drives: the first expresses the desire to be oneself as an individual; the second, the desire for social contact and acceptance. Youth would surely be responsive to a philosophy that provided the

right balance between individual and social spheres and that had a credible spiritual message as well as an economic solution.

Today's young men and women will settle down. Many will be caught in the rat-race they now deplore;

some will remain defiant. They will be over thirty before they realize it, and what are they going to do about the world they inherited and which they now deplore? They had better look to it, for the youth of the 1970s will be coming along—and then what?

Sabotage Taxation

J. W. DARK

(In *The Free Trader*, July 1969)

THE EAGERNESS of international bankers to advance £2,000 million through the International Monetary Fund to the Bank of England and their frequent visits of detailed enquiry into its accounts bodes ill for British national sovereignty. Whenever a nation is unable to pay the interest on its debts, the creditors move in, either openly or with more discreet, and therefore more deadly sophistication. In 1580 Portugal's debts to Spain brought the Spanish creditors to impose the Sixty Years Captivity. Portugal's humiliation was open and unequivocal. In the South American republics, the Yankee creditors used local dictators to extract payment of interest and capital. Today in Britain our international creditors manipulate the Labour Government as its willing bailiff to transfer the Bank of England debt to the working population by means of wage freeze, import duties, inflation and mass unemployment. Small wonder that this Government is one of the most unpopular regimes ever, even with its strongest backer, the Trades Union Congress. A reckless debtor has few friends, and his closest relations disengage from approaching bankruptcy.

Already the Welsh and the Scots are seeking to disengage themselves from this huge national debt, expressing this tendency in demands for Home Rule in various forms from constitutional voting to armed extremism. Beneath the froth is the determination to leave the Bank of England to pay its own debts and to avoid the drastic taxation about to be imposed upon the British people. The bombing of Inland Revenue offices in Wales is no accident but a calculated attempt to disrupt the machinery of taxation. When records are lost, the complicated collection of tax on income and capital becomes chaotic.

This method of taxation requires full co-operation from all employers and handlers of money, at their own expense, both to collect and account for tax deductions. The visible staff of the Inland Revenue receives and checks all returns from this invisible unpaid army of collectors. A third army of private auditors and accountants, paid by individual taxpayers, exists to check the accuracy of both the official and unofficial collectors of tax. The inter-action of these three completely non-productive armies leads to their mutual increase in numbers and consequent expense of collection, which,

being borne solely by the taxed population, must cause a continuous rise in the proportion of income and capital culled in tax. As this ratio approaches 40 per cent, the burden of collection nullifies the extra tax collected. The sources of taxation become depleted, if not exhausted, as shown in the marked reluctance of many people to make the extra effort or investment needed to pay the extra tax.

Each nation has its own critical tax level beyond which the nation declines into stagnation. When this despair becomes general, population becomes static and declines, as the indigenous Indians of the Americas have shewn. How far taxation in Britain has engendered this spread of disintegration is not known, but the signs cannot be ignored. The possibility of progressive collapse cannot be entirely discounted.

Whilst central government taxes through the Inland Revenue, local government taxes the value of improvements to land through the rating system. The rate is payable in advance and is enforced by legal means. It is not a contract but a tax primarily to finance local government, levied on effort and investment, i.e., improvements to the raw land!

Where land is not used or improved and where buildings are not in occupational use, no rate is due. Thus land and buildings can be left idle without being taxed in the speculative hope that scarcity value will attract a good sale price.

When demands for tax emanate from two powerful sources and impinge on the same source of revenue, albeit for separate central and local financing, the danger arises from one set of demands taking too much from the available funds and leaving the other set of demands unsatisfied. When the taxed firm or individual is made bankrupt for one set of taxes, the other demands are also irrecoverable, and the burden of unpaid debts and employment usually falls upon the locality not on central government. This means in practice that the different Commissioners arrive to achieve a balance in tax demands by means of cross subsidies and grants so that the maximum total tax is extracted without "killing the goose that lays the golden egg."

The only source of direct tax being labour (effort) and capital (past effort) means that an increasing share of all tax collected must be absorbed by collection