



4. Finally, and I think least likely, a military coup d'etat would be likely to provoke the same revolutionary violence as a Wallace victory. But are we not now REALLY straining the bounds of the possible? Two views, one naive and the other cynical, deny the likelihood of a military take-over in the United States. Most of us have been so thoroughly lulled into a sense of security by our strong record of civilian supremacy that military political intervention is not even in our thought repertory. The MacArthur dismissal confirmed the tradition, and Seven Days in May was entertaining but rather unconvincing reading. The cynics, on the other hand, argue "why a military coup when the military-industrial complex already runs the country?" I suggest to both the blue-eyed and the cynics that it is not impossible to concoct a scenario that might bring our armed forces to seize political power. Imagine the following combination of circumstances: the administration flounders indecisively while anarchic violence spreads; the Vietnam war is ended ingloriously, the radical opposition being blamed for our "defeat;" unemployment grows as a war-gearred economy is slow to readjust; returning GI's are steered into the universities with increased GI-bills to stop them from swelling the unemployment rate — but this gambit backfires as vastly increased crops of graduates emerge a few years later into a stagnant employment market. Remember how important the alienation of the intellectuals is to the start of a revolution. An intellectual is never so alienated as when there is no niche for him in the system. All these factors, then, would contribute to a long period of instability which, if not handled with extreme care by the administration, might lead to a government of the extreme right either by ballot or military take-over. As a postscript we might add that the chances of a coup d'etat would be enhanced if a "peace" party, anti-militarist with a program of severe cutback of the military establishment, would appear to have a strong chance of electoral success. Then the honor of the nation and its security from external attack would demand of the armed forces that they step in.

Having by now tired and, I fear, frightened you a bit with these blueprints for belligerence and blow-ups, let us by all means scrounge around for a few rays of hope.

One ray of hope is at the same time a paradox, or perhaps a tragicomedy. Did it ever occur to you that those on the left who are screaming "fascist pigs" and those on the right who are screaming "dirty liberals and communists" are venting their venom on one and the same animal — the "Establishment." That same establishment is, according to the radical left, guilty of political repression of Black Panthers and campus dissidents, and, according to the radical right (as exemplified by Col. Curtis Dall's Liberty Lobby), guilty of political persecution of archconservative Texas Democrat John Dowdy. It appears, then, that we have a liberal-conservative or "middle" establishment that is foe to both extreme fringes and friend to the "middle American," member of the less and less silent majority. That does not necessarily mean that the "middle American" is the good guy; it does mean that there are more middle Americans than there are fringe Americans, and that this hardly revolution-prone segment of our population might constitute sufficient ballast to keep both left-wing revolution and right-wing counter-revolution from getting airborne.

Perhaps that is scant comfort, however, since a dead weight type of revolution-restraint is hardly likely to solve the urgent social problems

in our country. Middle America must be mobilized, worked on, to bring about that creative and peaceful change that alone will keep our social fabric from being rent in twain as left and right tug mightily in opposite directions. As Richard Krickus pointed out in an insight-studded article in *The New Leader* last December, "the college radicals and liberals who live, work and love in our universities and urban centers — that is, the cosmopolitan oases where the arts, mass media, and liberal professions flourish — are isolated from "main-stream America." They are trying to foster social revolution without the masses. Despising the workers and all who are less educated, they spout "revolution for the hell of it" rhetoric heavily mixed with Marxist jargon and play confrontation politics ostensibly to release those same workers and the rest of us from oppressive capitalist exploitation. Meanwhile, says Krickus, the common man gloats as William F. Buckley Jr., their St. George, "disembowels the smug, self-righteous liberal dragon with scathing bon mots that many of his less articulate viewers do not have at their command."

Revolution will not happen without mass support. That mass support is now denied the revolutionists. However, NO political change will take place without mass support. Hence the most hopeful sign of the recent strikes and frenzied activities on our campuses is NOT the arrogant confrontation with the status quo forces, but the canvassing and educational activities of students and professors who have gone out on the streets, into factories and into meeting halls and TALKED; who have sought to understand and to spread understanding; who have embraced the POLITICS OF PERSUASION. No matter what we thought of McCarthy as a candidate, the glorious thing of his campaign was that student dissenters worked within the system. The final and cruel crushing of McCarthy's chances at Mayor Daley's Chicago debacle turned many a sincere campaign worker into a cynic who felt "the system" stopped their hero. Therefore they turned to crushing the system. But the System is not all Mayor Daleys and Chicago cops. It is middle American consensual politics. The inert mass of middle America resents and resists browbeating. Let us temper the hot summer so many fear with our cool rhetoric. Let us bring change with works of construction, not play games of revolution make-believe by baiting construction workers.

