

firm parents. So-called civil rights leaders preach hatred of men, practice trespass, and encourage the destruction of property without being held responsible for what they do. Those dependent upon government for a livelihood are permitted to vote, and thus to vote themselves benefits at someone else's expense. Union leaders press for wage increases which they do not have to pay. Congress votes increase after increase in the Federal debt, with no provision for paying it. It has been years since any reduction of the debt has been made. Policemen are not held responsible for violating the rights of the accused; instead, criminals are turned loose by higher courts when their rights are said to have been violated. Thus, irresponsibility is compounded. Movements are afoot to subvert established political processes by granting to groups power unrestricted by popular consent. Examples of this are civilian review boards and civil rights groups and organizations being given Federal monies to dispense. Irresponsibility is highly organized, vociferous, and rampant in the land.

There is a saying that goes like this: "What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say." This certainly applies to those who admonish us to be re-

sponsible today. We have been busily removing the supports to responsibility while shouting ever more loudly that men should be responsible. Responsibility depends upon a very real nexus between cause and effect, between actions and consequences, between accomplishments and rewards, between what we do and our accountability for it, not upon a spurious indoctrination of a sense of responsibility. "Independent" boards and commissions cannot be made responsible by proclamation, nor labor leaders by acclamation, nor civil rights workers by asseveration, nor teachers by inculcation, nor parents by vocalizing about it.

Penalties Removed

A confusion of terminology hides the truth from us. In a vague sort of way, the admonitions to boards and commissions are to be *circumspect* in what they do, to labor leaders to be *moderate* in their demands, to civil rights advocates to be *gentle* in their actions. It would be as logical to admonish thieves to take only a moderate amount of money or goods, to admonish assaulters to exert gentle persuasions, or to admonish extortionists to be *circumspect* in their demands — while removing all penalties for criminal behavior. For we have made

long strides toward separating cause from effect, power from responsibility, and actions from their consequences. We are trying to make the individual's spurious sense of responsibility do the work formerly done by individual conscience, social responsibility, and legal accountability.

The Consequences of the Irresponsible Way of Life

It requires no major gift of prophecy to foresee the outcome of organized irresponsibility. Indeed, some of the consequences are already with us, and it is necessary only to extend them in other cases. Boards and commissions establish inflexibility in the economy, on the one hand, and produce uncertainty on the other, making businesses difficult to operate, resulting in high prices and poor service. Labor unions paralyze industrial centers and are restrained from extending this to the country as a whole only by a dubious sense of responsibility or the threat of force and involuntary servitude. Academicians fill children's minds with notions that have been tested by neither reason nor evidence. Government action produces unemployment by minimum wages and tries to correct this by heavy doses of inflation. Violence and destruction in the cities, particularly in summer,

makes life increasingly perilous and property insecure.

Freedom becomes license without responsibility. To put it another way, there can be no freedom without responsibility. No man is free when he can have his life taken by murderers who will not be held responsible by the courts, when his ownership of property is vitiated by the control of those who do not receive the consequences of their actions, when his children may be taught any doctrine without his approval or consent, when the actions of others are restrained only by their inward determination to restrain them. Free men are responsible men, else every man's freedom is potentially a trespass upon every other man's.

Nor can civilization survive the constant strain put upon it by organized irresponsibility. The desire to exercise power without responsibility may not be the oldest sin, but it is one of the earliest according to the Bible. After Cain had slain Abel, he wished to avoid the responsibility for it. The desire is there, but the nation that succors it wills its own destruction. Men lose their integrity and are corrupted by organized irresponsibility. Policemen lose their zeal to apprehend criminals when those whom they catch are turned loose. Businessmen turn to lobby-