

trol of process, for total planning and predestination, by the elite men.⁷

Or, as the late C. S. Lewis has put it, when we hear the phrase "man must take control of man," we should watch out; it means that some men must take control of all the others.⁸

The second event that broke men's faith in progress was the First World War. It combined with the third factor, Freudianism, to convince men that the faith in the rationality of mankind was too easy, even naive. Freud's own pessimism concerning the possibilities of psychoanalysis for curing men's psychological problems was not adopted by the majority of his followers, but this should not blind us to the fact of Freudian pessimism: long ages of evolution, he believed, would be necessary to separate men from their irrational, bloody antecedents.⁹ The War seemed to prove Freud's contention that subrational influences guide men's decisions.

The faith in inevitable, natural

⁷ R. J. Rushdoony, *Biblical Philosophy of History*, p. 7.

⁸ C. S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), p. 37. The same theme is explored in his *Abolition of Man*.

⁹ R. J. Rushdoony, *Freud* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1965), compares "original Freudianism" with later Freudian environmentalism.

progress has been lost. This loss of faith has been devastating in the historical guild. The triumph of historicism and relativism have emasculated historical studies. J. H. Plumb has bewailed this development:

So the modern historian is crucified by this dilemma: he must act like a scientist although historical objectivity cannot exist. His work can have no validity except for himself, and, perhaps, for fellow historians playing the same game by the same rules or perhaps for those men of his age who think and feel like himself.... The philosophers of history will allow history to be a profession, even admit to its having educational and literary value: what they will not tolerate is the idea that it has a social purpose....¹⁰

Plumb cries out in horror against what has happened to the writing of history in our time; vainly, he tries to bring new life to a dead idea. Unfortunately for his efforts, there is nothing deader culturally than a dead idea.

So there we have them. The idealists insisting that history is merely a present world, ever changing, never static; the academic positivists burrowing like boll-weevils in the thickets of facts, mindless, deliberately, of purpose and meaning outside the

¹⁰ J. H. Plumb, "The Historian's Dilemma," in Plumb (ed.), *Crisis in the Humanities* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1964), p. 30.

orbit of their own activity; the public prophets using pseudo science to justify a repetitive, cyclical interpretation of history, and the litterateurs preoccupied with evocation and exercise of the imagination. The result is nihilistic and socially impotent.

All are equally guilty I think of wilfully rejecting the one certain judgment of value that can be made about history, and that is *the idea of progress*. If this great human truth were once more to be frankly accepted, the reasons for it, and the consequences of it, consistently and imaginatively explored and taught, history would not only be an infinitely richer education but also play a much more effective part in the culture of western society.¹¹

It is a bleak, bleak picture that Plumb paints. The halls of ivy have become empty shells—broken shells, like Humpty Dumpty. "History properly so-called can be written only by those who find and accept a sense of direction in history itself," writes E. H. Carr. "The belief that we have come from somewhere is closely linked with the belief that we are going somewhere. A society which has lost belief in its capacity to progress in the future will quickly cease to concern itself with its progress in the past."¹²

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹² E. H. Carr, *What Is History?*, cited in Rushdoony, *Biblical Philosophy of History*, pp. 132-33.

The Concept of Economic Growth

The social scientists who have retained their faith in planning have not been hit so hard as those in the humanities by the death of the idea of progress. Economists in recent years have become fascinated with the possibility of continual economic expansion. The first signs of the faltering of this faith have become evident in recent months, specifically with regard to the question of ecology and the pollution problem. Last November, at a meeting of the United States Commission for UNESCO, a call for total stability went forth to the world. The *New York Times* News Service in late November ran a feature article in which Jerry Mander, a San Francisco advertising man, was quoted as saying, "Beginning now, there should be national preparations toward a no-growth economy." Robert Anderson, board chairman of Atlantic Richfield Oil Company, called for negative population growth. Hal Lehrman, president of the Overseas Press Club, said: "You've got to prove growth is evil. How do you do it?" Mander admitted that "at this moment, we are totally unprepared, emotionally, psychologically, and technologically for the emerging facts." The propaganda campaign is beginning. If it takes hold of the outlook of economists, an intellec-