The Novel of Bureaucracy: A Study of *The New Men*

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Submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research
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Abstract

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The New Men dramatizes the personal and public lives of the characters in relation to bureaucracy and to the development of the first Atomic Bomb. Just as the formal and informal theories of the organization in Sociology distinguish between human productivity and human nature, so in The New Men the characters live with this dilemma of split loyalties: how to work efficiently in the formal organization and how to live humanly. The resolution of the dilemma may be seen through the narrator, Lewis Eliot, who joins in himself both personal and public values. As Eliot, the true voice of the novel, resolves the dilemma in his own person, a general resolution of the dilemma becomes evident. In the tradition of the English Novel, C.P. Snow transforms the data of social commentary into the dream of literature that his art realizes.

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Chapter One

The subject of this thesis will be an examination, through The New Men by C.P. Snow, of the personal and public lives of the characters in relation to bureaucracy.

To accomplish such an examination, however, we must first consider the relation of literature and reality, and the light that the first is able to give to the second. In broad terms, literature is a product of the imagination, of the inner self, and reality is the stuff of which the world outside the individual is made, the outer self. Any lead that we may take in this enquiry is, as Whitehead said of all enquiries in Western thought, a footnote to Plato. I would make bold to say a footnote to Aristotle too. For between the thinking of Plato and Aristotle on the nature of the real lies the dilemma of our subject.

Plato would have it that the real does not have a separate existence of its own, that is outside of the individual's imagination, but that the real is identical with an abstract Ideal of thought. Even the idea of an individual as such is second-hand, being dependent on an abstraction, and the representation of any subject in literature would be three times removed from the truly real. The realness of a table, for example, would consist in the idea of a universal abstraction, Table. The artifact, or particular table, as given form by its maker, would be twice removed from the Ideal; and a representation of table in literature would be even one more time removed from the real

so conceived. Literature for Plato, then, would be an inferior representation of the truth, and a storyteller, in fact, would be something close to a liar.

Aristotle, like his teacher Plato, also recognized the reality of an idea, but he did not place absolute reality in a universal Ideal. Instead, Aristotle would have it that a test of reality lies in the objectivity of the object, as distinct from any idea we have of that object. Objective reality was for him the test of realness. If I see a table in a room, my idea of the table would need to conform to the inherent nature of such a table; and every particular table approximates to such an objective reality. Literature for Aristotle, then, would be a representation of objective reality and, like an idea, would need to be in conformity with the way things are.

But is it possible for an individual to know the 'way things are'? The varied points of view of one and the same situation confound, it would seem, the objectivity of any thing or of any being. The reporting of an accident by many witnesses may well present varied points of view, not only on details but on essential observations. A.J. Ayer in The Problem of Knowledge[I] discusses the relation of the knower and the known at some length and with the

[I] A.J. Ayer, The Problem of Knowledge, (Harmondsworth, 1962).

skills of philosophical and scientific methods, yet still leaves the enquiry suspended in uncertainty. The best and longest proved statements on this question leave the enquirer with no greater certainty than that there is a relation between the perception of the individual and the reality outside of him. If this is the condition of the real, the relation between literature and reality would appear to be at least as indecisive. Perhaps the best that can be said of both the individual and literature knowing reality is that, though both see the way things are in themselves, both see also in terms of their own experience, with the bias of sense perception and temperament. St. Paul says of another reality: "For now we see through a glass, darkly."[2]

But Francis Thompson, poet, answers St. Paul:

> But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
> Cry—and upon thy so sore loss
> Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
> Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.[3]

It may be, then, that literature has a truth of its own. The poet, the storyteller has the intuition or the sensibility to see the world outside of himself in a way that transforms observable facts into the clearer light of his imagination. Through the poetic image, in particular, is he able to make connections between sense experience

[2] The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, XIII, II. The text is that of the Authorized Version.

[3] Francis Thompson, "The Kingdom of God," The Ways of the Poem, ed. Josephine Miles (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1961), p. 200.

and his imagination. In this way, the commonplace is heightened to take on the light of the uncommon and the uncommon is seen in a clearer light. C.D. Lewis in The Poet's Way of Knowledge puts it this way:

> Man is appalled by the immensities and the minutenesses which science has disclosed for him. They are indeed unimaginable. But may not poetry be a possible way of mediating them to our imagination? of scaling them down to imaginative comprehension? Let us remember Perseus, who could not look directly at the nightmare Gorgon without being turned to stone, but could look at her image reflected in the shield the goddess of Wisdom lent him.[4]

The novelist, as he began to polish his art in the eighteenth century, may have been Perseus, and the novel, for some, the shield of the goddess of Wisdom. Yet the point of view of the novel did not come into being so much as the point of view of one or of a group of novelists, but was in itself the closest expression of a changing sensibility and a changing social structure. For though human behavior may remain the same from generation to generation, the society and mode of expression of each generation change. The world and world-view of Elizabethan England from which the novel emerged found its expression mainly in drama. "The change from the mystery play to Marlowe was a qualitative change: it represented a change in men's interests, in their attitudes to themselves, to one another, and to the world about them."[5] Through

[4] C.D. Lewis, The Poet's Way of Knowledge, (Cambridge, 1957), p. 31.

[5] Walter Allen, The English Novel, (London, 1954), p. 19.

the development of drama from the mediaeval miracle plays to the University Wits came, in part, the genius of Marlowe and Shakespeare. Perhaps the decisive part of the change, however, was a response to the new learning and a changing order of society. The closer approximation of the language of the characters, in Wordsworth's phrase, to "the language of men,"[6] allowed the freer interaction of characters from different levels of society. Language, as a tool of everyman's speech, began to be wrought at this time and worked hand in hand with the change of characterization. Without stretching a point: "so long as Shakespeare is performed and read in England his influence on the novel will continue; simply because for us his work is the final standard of imaginative writing."[7]

In the later years of the seventeenth century, both the form of literature and its language became more flexible in characterization and more articulated in speech. At about this time, as Walter Allen puts it: "an English prose came into general use flexible enough, articulated enough, for the task of analysing character and the ordering and arranging of significant detail."[8] Bunyan, in particular, has deserved notice in this connection. Although Pilgrim's Progress was printed from its

6 William Wordsworth, "Preface to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads," Wordsworth Selected Poetry, ed. Mark Van Doren (New York, 1950), p. 680.

7 Allen, p. 22.

8 Allen, p. 27.

beginning in the form of drama, with the speaker of each speech printed, yet the variety and analysis of character is seen as one of the immediate predecessors to the novel that soon was to follow. It was, through characterization and speech, the link between what was and what was to be.

The first novels, in epistolary form and in moral guise, took up where the drama and Bunyan had left off. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe was as much an allegory of the Good Life as was Pilgrim's Progress. Yet it was also one of the first novels in English. It could be both moral instruction and novel because the society of Bunyan and the non-Conformists was the same, though their numbers had increased and had become at about this time the entrepreneurial and monied class. They wanted their story-telling as they had both their sermons and their newspapers--with a moral and a sentiment. Defoe, as journalist and as pamphleteer for the non-Conformist cause, could give them both. In Journal of the Plague Year, Defoe wrote one of the most vivid historical recreations. As Defoe worked his trade as novelist, he chose details to illustrate his story and a narrative and language to suit the continuity of the story and the background of the characters. As he did in Moll Flanders. Thus Defoe was able to combine a precise description of contemporary reality with a valid moral point of view.

Other novels of the period are also concerned with the message behind plot and characterization, sometimes to the exclusion

of the latter. Richardson's Pamela was in this tradition. As a moral guide and as a 'heart-breaker', it had few rivals at the turn of the eighteenth century. The story centers about the fortunes and virtue of a much-maligned maiden, Pamela, in the household of Squire B. His advances, her protests, her parents' admonitions, her avowals--all in the form of letter-writing--make for epic pathos, and humor. In the tradition of Bunyan, it continued to be read from pulpits for decades after it was first published, and as humor, it met its match in Fielding's Shamela.

The point of view of these early novels, like their predecessor, the pamphlets, but unlike their other predecessor, the drama, was mainly contained in one of the characters. Fielding, in Tom Jones for example, devised a narrator, who was both omniscient in judging the nature and motives of the characters, and who, through his comments as well as through the voice of the characters themselves, was able to reveal character. From the early part of the novel the roles of the characters are established. Tom, Allworthy, Sophia, Squire Western are on the side of light; Blifil, Twackum, Square are on the side of darkness. But the subtlety of character revelation does not have to depend on allegory, as in Bunyan. The characters themselves have to earn their role, even for one who is billed as 'All-worthy'. Through Allworthy's voice, and through the irony of the narrator does the reader see Allworthy as the imperfect and all too human being and judge that

he is. By a comment here and a moral sentiment there, the narrator takes to himself and gives to the reader the true voice of the story. In spite of the multiplicity of the characters, the novel takes place in the consciousness of one. In Tristram Shandy, Sterne was to push this further so that the whole story of the life and opinions of one of the characters, even while he is in the womb, are told in his person. But even in a novel like Tristram Shandy, social commentary and contemporary influence of ideas are evident through the preoccupations of the characters and through the structure, based on Locke, of the novel itself.

The Victorian novelists did not change the workings of the novel significantly, but, like their predecessors a century before, they changed their outlook somewhat in response to a changing sensibility and social order. The entrepreneurial and monied class of the generation before continued to be mainly the reading public of novels, and the industrialization that they had first created often formed the warp and woof of the novels. The printed page of the novel also allowed a leisurely examination of social issue and custom, that sometimes neared more tract than literature.

Coningsby by Disraeli is more often political commentary than the creation of characters who truly live their lives in terms of the stuff of which the story is made. In the person of the hero, Coningsby, the novel tells the story of conservative principles for the industrialized age. The new generation will succeed in having a right balance of power where the old has not. Political,

religious, and social balance is identified in the promise of the novel's hero. Yet even though commentary takes up much of the novel, the solution and worth of a certain politics and a certain sociology is in terms of how Coningsby lives out the problem. The resolution of social problems is in the right feeling of the characters.

In Hard Times, however, the ways of the industrial world are seen in another light. The main point of the novel is the absence of humanity in a system where industry is all-important. Society, in such a system, operates to keep the machines of industry grinding so that the wealthy few may continue to have increased profit. Education, religion, the city, the countryside, and the family are sub-institutions in the industrial world-view of the novel. Though this is the message, the life of the story takes its direction from the characters as they live their lives in terms of the system.

In the same way, the novels of George Eliot and Trollope document social vagary and movements, and 'high affairs' in the Barchester Novels. The interpretation of the social documentation, as in the novels of the century before, takes its sense of direction from the knowing and controlling voice of the narrator. But in the novels, not long after those of Eliot and Trollope, a significant change takes place in both structure and in the concern of the novelist. For the later Joyce and for Virginia Woolf, the

consciousness of the individual becomes the main concern and determines the form of the novel, its stream of consciousness. As Sterne did in the eighteenth century, Joyce maps the imagination of his characters, examining their inner lives as the reason for their outer lives. The point of view of the novel is not directed outwards, as clearly as in the novels before, to relate to the social system, but is directed inwards to a centre in the consciousness of the individual. From this centre, is the reader able to know some point of view, that may also be a comment on the times and values in the world of Ulysses and To the Lighthouse.

Yet the truth of the novel, of the English Novel in particular, has been its vision of what it means to be human in the society which men have made for themselves. Though even in the most consciously sociological novel, the sociological data have been transformed into the experience of the person or persons of the novel. The facts of a social fabric are seen as an extension of the individual's consciousness and have a life of their own, as Plato would have it, in the individual. But, then, reality is not a table in itself only, but a table known. Society is not an abstraction in itself, but the experience of people who make it in their image and call it theirs. The novel tries to image this experience.

So the data and the dream as the two elements that

literature brings together will be our concern in the study of The New Men. The first, its data, is in the tradition of many novels of the previous century, in which industrialization and its consequences were central themes. The situation of the novel now, however, is no longer the exploitation of the worker by a Bounderby, as in Hard Times, nor is there the victimized in the same sense that a Stephen Blackpool is victimized. In our rather affluent part of the world, the world of The New Men, we do not only or mainly thirst after justice, but we strive to live our lives as humanly as possible and at the same time run our machines efficiently. Bureaucracy, the sometimes unfriendly giant, is the situation in The New Men and its consequence is the mushroom-shaped cloud.

The dream in this novel, in its relation to the data, approaches the nightmare. For between the inhumanity of bureaucracy and the Bomb, the individual cannot find his place and live his life of values. Stephen Blackpool, at least, could work towards a better day other than his hard times, and be certain of his own sense of values, even if he could not believe or trust the system of values outside of him. But bureaucracy, Snow may be saying, takes life out of a man more completely than the coal mines ever did. As Lewis Eliot, the central character and narrator, lives his life, as Victorian characters before him did, he lives a life also of the imagination, as the characters of Joyce and Woolf do. And where the data and dream come together, as we trace the thought and feeling of the novel, will be the centre of our enquiry.

Chapter Two

To begin, our purpose will be to examine the sociological considerations in regard to bureaucracy in The New Men, postponing for later considerations of the dream of literature.

As a society becomes more involved, organizations of greater involvement are necessary to meet the situation. But, at the same time, both the individual and the community remain much the same in their human needs as in less involved societies. The organizations, then, in theory, are not meant to replace one set of human values for another, but to give an extra dimension to what it means to live and work together as human beings. Yet this is not always true. The bigness of the organization may at times live more by the medium (rules and regulations) to achieve certain ends than by the ends themselves. What sometimes happens, then, is that human beings may be at a loss to live their lives as humanly as possible both on and off the job.

At the turn of the century, Max Weber examined the characteristics of bureaucracy that might bring about 'organization man.' "There is the principle of fixed and jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by rules, that is, by laws or administrative regulations."[I] The duties necessary to accomplish a bureaucratic ideal are part of the official work of bureaucrats

[I] H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. and trans., From Max Weber (New York, 1958), p. 196.

and are distributed in a fixed way. The authority to dispense these duties is also distributed and regulated in a fixed way. Provision is made to ensure the perpetuation of these tasks and the capability of those who fulfil them and of those who dispense authority. As a result of the give and take of directions, there is a structure of authority and responsibility. Communication between levels of authority is through written memoranda, the 'files'; which are preserved and serve as the memory of the organization. The official is expected to receive thorough training to equip him for his duties; he is expected to learn, in addition to his own specialized training, the procedures of his office or department. The procedures or rules of his work-unit are usually constant and are essential for all in order to conduct affairs. When the office is in full activity, the official is expected to give his full time and energies to his work, though his presence on the job may not be always obligatory.

"Office holding is a 'vocation'."[2] Weber appears to mean that the official needs to commit himself completely to the achievement of the goals of the organization and that the organization, in turn, will provide for him. The thorough training of a bureaucrat and the periodic examinations that he writes to demonstrate his competence are proof of his commitment. Although the rationale

[2] Gerth and Mills, p. 198.

of a large organization has as its groundwork "impersonal and functional purposes,"[3] the bureaucrat is encouraged to identify with a set of values. "These are the ersatz for the earthly or supra-mundane personal master: ideas such as 'state', 'church', 'community', 'party', or 'enterprise' are thought of as being realized in a community; they provide an ideological halo for the master."[4] In return for his devotion, the official receives benefits of financial security and social esteem. Once he has received his appointment, the permanence of it is usually secure until his retirement. During his tenure, he receives a fixed salary, according to the rank that he holds, and, at the end, a pension until death. His social esteem rises as he himself rises in governmental or managerial ranks, and may be in proportion to his own social background. The measurement of prestige is:

> a strong demand for administration by trained experts; a strong and stable social differentiation, where the official predominantly derives from socially and economically privileged strata because of the social distribution of power; or where the costliness of the required training and status conventions are binding upon him.[5]

Unlike the non-bureaucrat office-holder, who performs services for an honorific goal and who may or may not do efficient

[3] Gerth and Mills, p. I99.

[4] Gerth and Mills, p. I99.

[5] Gerth and Mills, p. 200.

work, the bureaucrat, on a fixed salary, is obliged to produce. He does so, not necessarily out of a commitment to an ideal, but because that is what he is paid for and unless he does produce he will not be paid. As such, one bureaucrat and the machinery of bureaucrats are a self-perpetuating mechanism. "They have a common interest in seeing that the mechanism continues its functions and that the societally exercised authority carries on."[6]

Of its nature, then, bureaucracy as a "precision instrument"[7] can be manipulated by any power interest. Governments, economic systems, and churches may come and go, but the bureaucracy remains to perform the same organizational tasks. In time, it may even be that the bureaucracy itself will be able to contest on approximately equal terms against the might of the power interests. If the power elite allows the superior knowledge of the bureaucrat to make more and more of the decisions, then it will lose its controlling say. This has happened in corporate management. The owners or shareholders of a company no longer make the decisions and are barely able to influence policy; the officers of a company now call the tune. One way that the office-holders may live unto themselves is through secrecy: "The concept of the 'official secret' is the specific invention of bureaucracy, and nothing is

[6] Gerth and Mills, p. 228.

[7] Gerth and Mills, p. 231.

so fanatically defended by the bureaucracy as this attitude."[8]

But the scientists in The New Men, and Lewis Eliot in particular, concern themselves with the presence and absence of values in their work, aside from what Whitehall considers to be of value. In this way, some of the characters attempt to resolve the tension of public and personal values. The viewpoint of another student of the formal organization appraises the case for bureaucracy less severely than Weber and nears the resolution of 'split purposes', as the scientists and Eliot seem to near it.

Amitai Etzioni in Modern Organizations[9] considers an alternative viewpoint. Whereas the Classical Approach, as Weber saw it, limited its study to the formal or structural nature of the organization, the Human Relations Approach has been more concerned with the informal or human nature of the organization.

One of the early methods of the Classical Approach was developed by an American, Frederick W. Taylor,[10] at the turn of the century. His methods have come to be known as 'Time and Motion Studies'. Taylor's students, the human engineers, were concerned with the best physiological performance possible from the workers that they observed. Their goal was to align as closely as possible

[8] Gerth and Mills, p. 233.

[9] Amitai Etzioni, Modern Organizations, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., I964).

[10] Frederick W. Taylor, Scientific Management, (New York, I9II).

a worker's performance with the highest expectations of organizational goals. Because it was to an organization's economic advantage to have maximum output, the worker was trained to meet the desired goals.

The Human Relations Approach began with a rationale similar to that described above of the Classical Approach. From 1927 to 1932, Elton Mayo conducted a series of observations at the Western Electric Company's Hawthorne Works in Chicago. Mayo and his colleagues began their observations with the methods of the Classical Approach. For their purposes, they isolated a section of the workers of the plant so that they could observe them better and have greater control over the environment. As they lengthened rest periods and increased illumination, for example, productivity increased. They expected as much. Then they began to shorten rest periods and decrease illumination. To their surprise, productivity continued to go up. There was no satisfactory explanation for this in terms of the self-interest theory of Adam Smith or of the formal organizational theories of Weber or of Taylor.

The explanation seems to lie in the joint role the observers gave to the workers in the arrangement of these decisions. Because the workers were consulted on their destiny, they responded with corresponding cooperation. The compactness of their work-unit enabled them also to share a social life, which gave a solidarity to the work group and which they used to

achieve organizational goals.

From the Hawthorne Experiments a number of principles of group behavior were developed. Etzioni summarizes them:

> [I] The level of production is set by social norms, not by physiological capacities. [2] Non-economic rewards and sanctions significantly affect the behavior of the workers and largely limit the effect of economic incentive plans....[3] Often workers do not act or react as individuals but as members of groups. [4] The importance of leadership for setting and enforcing group norms and the difference between informal and formal leadership.... [5] the importance of participation in decision-making.[11]

Both the Classical Approach and the Human Relations Approach agreed on one point: "neither saw any basic contradiction or insoluble dilemma in the relationship between the organization's quest for rationality and the human search for happiness."[12] From this common viewpoint and with the insight of both approaches, the Structuralists attempted a synthesis of the two. They widened their analysis of the organization by a consideration of all manner of organizations and not only business and governmental offices. They accepted the fact of Weber's concept of the organization and, at the same time, humanized it, as Elton Mayo saw it.

In juxtaposition to the administrator or official, whom we have so far considered, the role and values of the professional differ. From a professional viewpoint, his first loyalty is to his profession and only then to the organization's goal. If there should

[11] Etzioni, pp. 34-38.

[12] Etzioni, p. 39.

be conflict between the two, the second would most likely be the first to suffer. And students of the professions feel that this is the way it should be, if the professional is to have the freedom of intellectual movement to teach his class, plead his case, or treat his patient. In the end, the rationale of a professional is whether a decision he makes is right according to his conscience. If, for example, a physician feels that a certain drug would be most efficacious to treat an ailment, but the treasurer of the hospital board should feel that it would cost too much, the professional's word would likely carry the most weight. But in an organization where economic considerations are paramount, the administrator's word would likely carry the most weight. Etzioni explains:

> In private business, overinfluence by professionals threatens the realization of organizational goals and sometimes even the organization's existence. In professional organizations overinfluence by the administration, which takes the form of ritualization of means, undermines the goals for which the organization has been established and endangers the conditions under which knowledge can be created and institutionalized.[13]

That is, there is inherent conflict of interests between the spheres of influence of the administrator and the professional.

These two sides of the organization, the formal, as seen by Weber, and the informal, as seen by Etzioni, represent the impersonal and personal framework of the characters in The New

[13] Etzioni, p. 82.

Men. Although Snow may not always clearly demarcate where the one begins and the other ends, these two sides would appear to reflect a similar unfulfilment and fulfilment, respectively, of human beings, on-the-job, as the characters in The New Men see them. On the one hand, are the administrators, who, seemingly, live the values of the organization; on the other, are the scientists, who, seemingly, live the values of their science and of humanity. And, though Snow may not think the same concepts of the sociologist nor speak the same language, both Snow and the sociologist seem to feel the same dilemma or anguish of the human condition of bureaucracy.

Chapter Three

As a documentary and sociological novel, The New Men is a study of the interaction of related government departments and professions. The historical subject of the novel is the creation of the first atomic bomb and the development of nuclear fission. The heart of the matter, however, is the tension between the characters as they make their careers and personal decisions in terms of the novel's central subject.

In brief, the social organizations studied in the novel are the nuclear establishment of scientists, the Ministry responsible for the nuclear establishment, and the larger, but vaguely defined, organization of the war-effort. The charter or guide lines of the organizational structure of the novel are ostensibly to be found in the conduct of the war. The Ministry exists to do a particular job in the interests of government business. The nuclear establishment has been created to serve these interests. And the larger organization exists to make the decisions and to implement them. But within the first two—the scientific establishment and the Ministry—are interests whose goals are not necessarily the same as those of the larger organization. These interests are professional and managerial loyalties, the advancement of personal ambitions, and loyalty to one's country. Between the charter and loyalties of both organization and power interests comes the play of tension in the novel.

Although it is impractical in sociological study to abstract the structure of a community of men without relating the

structure to the men themselves, and although it is next to impossible to do so in the reading of literature, I propose to come near such an abstraction in this chapter. Such an analysis in the novels of C.P. Snow is made even more uncertain because the point of view in the novels is entirely based on one of the characters, Lewis Eliot. Yet I make this abstraction with the understanding that a consideration of the organizations themselves will help us to focus better in succeeding chapters on the characters.

Management, represented by the civil servants, has two sides: one, as seen by themselves, and two, as seen by outsiders. Although the value of efficiency, such as a machine has, is uppermost in the minds of the civil servants, there is relatively little tension between their personal values and their public values. They accept the fact of the civil service machinery as a necessary and not entirely uncongenial means to achieve a goal. Rose is able to speak with some humor of "'our masters,'"[I] who will decide how to use the Bomb. Lewis Eliot says of Captain Smith: "To him, the race in nuclear bombs was as natural as a race in building battleships." (The New Men, 100). Bevill's role in the organization is that of the "supreme post-office" (The New Men, 15).

The machinery of the Civil Service is recognized for

[I] C.P. Snow, The New Men, (Harmondsworth, 1963), p. 70. Subsequent references will be to this edition.

its inhumanity by the narrator, Lewis Eliot, and by the outsiders, Martin Eliot and Mounteney. They do not see its culture or tradition, as Bevill and Rose would see it; instead, they see it as a demoralizing force that corrupts both those inside and outside of it. Even when they accommodate themselves to it or make use of it, it is still valueless and impersonal. "He [Martin] had more patience than either [Mounteney and Luke] with the practical running of the state machine." (The New Men, 102). Mounteney says of it: "'People who know about government machines all end up by doing what the machine wants'" (The New Men, 138). But the most telling criticism of bureaucracy comes from the partly insider and partly outsider, Lewis Eliot. He moves between the worlds of Cambridge, Whitehall, and Industry with an interested but a somewhat alarmed attitude towards the formal organization, especially as he sees it in government. He speaks of the daily routine of making calculations of human life and death: "there must exist memoranda about concentration camps." (The New Men, 99). And he speaks of the civil servant as "one ant in the anthill" (The New Men, 99). The only relief from this human machinery, as he describes it of Whitehall in The New Men and of the German war-machine in The Light and the Dark, is the "blessing that one's public memory is so short" (The New Men, 161).

A characteristic of bureaucracy is discretion in the conduct of affairs. As management sees it, discretion is necessary; as Lewis Eliot, who does not wholly share the views

of management, sees it, discretion or secretiveness is self-destroying. Someone, like Bevill, on the management side, not only finds it a necessary means to achieve an end, but takes pleasure in the exclusiveness of a secret and has devoted his life to never revealing one. Lewis speaks of him: "the almost salacious pleasure that many men show as they talk of secrets" (The New Men, I8). And others down the ladder of power take the same pleasure, though in an inverted sense. If you are in full power, as Bevill, the Minister, is, you can afford to keep secrets to yourself. But the lesser a bureaucrat's faculty for making decisions, the greater is his fancy to be in the secret. It enables him to share the exclusiveness of the organization's inner circle and, thereby, to maintain or raise his prestige.

> Most people I met, even on the technical committees, were still ignorant about the whole uranium project. But some could not resist letting one know that they were in the secret too. In the lavatory of the Athenaeum a bald bland head turned to me from the adjacent stall.
> 'March 22nd,' came the whisper and a finger rose to the lips. (The New Men, 77).

Eliot does not seem to oppose the use of discretion as a necessary means in the conduct of affairs, but sees its presence as extending unduly into all areas of human relations. In Eliot's own experience, it eats into his soul, making human relations more arduous than they would otherwise be for him. It creates a "brilliance of suspicion" (The New Men, I92) that distorts objective reality. Because of this, he comes near to identify a career man as one who will never give completely of himself. Eliot, in his own

experience, feels this intensely as a civil servant. But he also observes of business men: "I thought among the noise, the hard male laughter, how little any of these men were giving themselves away."[2] The only solution, though half-hearted, that he is able to give is: "accepting that necessity [of secrets] was one thing, making a career of it another." (The New Men, I75). Yet not even a division of interests quite succeeds in easing the tension that his activity in one area of life causes him in another. "If one had to live close to official secrets (or, what sounded different but produced the same effect, to a crime of violence) one knew what it must be like to be paranoiac" (The New Men, I92). Harsh criticism for what Eliot feels to be a harsh system.

Ambition, though it depends on the initiative of the individual, is made in the image of the formal organization. To succeed, in business or in government, requires the individual to share its value-system. As before, when Eliot, the interpreter of situation and character, looks outwards he perceives the regimentation of individual interests to the interests of the organization. "The men I sat with, in their offices, with their moral certainties, their comfortable, conforming indignation which never made them put a foot out of step—they were the men

[2] C.P. Snow, Homecomings, (Harmondsworth, I963), p. II6. Subsequent references will be to this edition.

who managed the world, they were the people who in any society came out on top." (Homecomings, 255). Yet such behavior is necessary, if the machinery of the organization is to work efficiently. These are the virtues of a highly organized society. Eliot accepts this fact, but, as before, is unwilling to accept fully the incompatibility of two areas of feeling: one, in the world of affairs, the other, in personal relations. The sense of values of the second, though these values may remain constant in one's personal life, live uneasily with the values of one's organizational life. These are the two worlds that create the tension in the series of novels, Strangers and Brothers. "Many men, delicate in their personal relations, had come to behave, and even to think, with that kind of cynicism, even though we concealed it from ourselves." (The New Men, 227).

Yet without ambition, as Eliot understands it, men would be deprived of one of the main motives for achievement in organizations, the wish for power: "the intricate labyrinthine and unassuageable rapacity, even in the best of men, of the love of power" (The New Men, 212). There is a protocol of job-achieving and of job-rewarding that complement the formality of bureaucracy: Eliot repeats Bevill's caution: "if anyone can do you harm or good...always be present in the flesh" (The New Men, 95); "Men liked fairness: it was part of the amenities, if in Bevill's and Rose's world you wanted your own way" (The New Men, 186); "he [Bevill] and Rose were both used to men pulling every string

to get a job and then deliberating whether they could take it" (The New Men, 215). For some, such as Bevill, Rose, and Lufkin, power is theirs and they enjoy it. As long as circumstances are favorable for them, they share what power they have with others in the different levels of the hierarchy. One such successful man is Herbert Getliffe, a one-time mentor of Eliot: "Getliffe in excelsis, one of the few men I had ever seen in sight of all he wanted" (Homecomings, 233). But for Eliot, as he looks inwards, his wish for power becomes dulled: "I said that I was not held any longer by the chessboard of power" (Homecomings, 217). As before, in his feelings for bureaucracy, Eliot, the narrator, may speak not only on his own behalf but on the side of the angels.

Whereas the administrators seemingly fulfil their managerial role and live their personal ambitions in terms of classical decorum, the scientists seemingly fulfil their professional role and live their personal ambitions in terms of romantic genius and agony. The pragmatism of administrators like Bevill and Rose lessens, on the one hand, their passion for an ideal role, such as the scientists claim, and, on the other, enables them to accommodate more easily to changing norms for the sake of efficiency. For this reason, they do not take themselves seriously in the same way that the scientists do. Rose is able to say with humor: "'Administrators, of course, being a very lowly form of life'" (The New Men, 214). They have

no charter of the professional manager, as the scientists claim for themselves. Though their social class, their connections with Cambridge and Oxford, and their conventions of behavior create loyalties and a culture of their own, they do not appear to have the same soul-searching of the scientists in a change of role and attitudes. Bevill says to Eliot that Britain now needs a new kind of administrator:

> 'You ought to know, I shouldn't call myself a socialist,' he said, as though making an astonishing but necessary revelation, 'but I don't care all that much what these fellows (the government) do, as long as we keep going.'
>
> It was spoken in drink, but it happened to be true. Half drunk myself, I loved him for it. (The New Men, 205).

Although civil servants like Bevill and Rose are able to give scientists their credit when credit is due, because they are not able to take an ideal role seriously, they find that the scientists are "prima donnas" (The New Men, 45). They find that, in the scientists' single-mindedness, these "garage hands" (The New Men, 56) might well threaten to destroy life.

The charter or professional ethic of the scientists commits them to the intrinsic worth of their science first, and only then to an organizational role. Not infrequently, therefore, there is conflict between them and their sustaining organization. The ideal is somewhat as it was at the beginning of this century, when 'free science' allowed an uninterrupted exchange of scientific information between nations. In spite of human weakness among some scientists of an earlier generation, scientists of Eliot's generation continue to hold to the earlier values: "in the

twenties and thirties, the great days of free science, there had been plenty of men jealous of priority, a few falsifying their results, some pinching their pupils'." (The New Men, 102). Snow writes of a like situation in The Affair. At times, scientists allow themselves, as persons, to share in the integrity of their science. "A good many scientists were as unselfconscious as Victorians in speaking of their ideals as though they were due to their own personal excellence" (The New Men, 102). And although scientists recognize the possible ill of science, they blame most of the ill on the misuse of science by the politicians and maintain the essentially good consequences of science as opposed to some that are ill. Within this sensibility, Eliot narrates the reactions of the scientists to their charter before and after the dropping of the Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

There are two issues: the integrity of science in its universality, and the contribution to the war-effort, with its consequent nationalism. The contradiction of interests does not allow an easy or a simple resolution of the tension. Some of the scientists, for reasons of science or of ideology, choose the first, as does Sawbridge, and give atomic information to the Russians. Others, such as Martin, Luke, and Mounteney, choose varying degrees of a via media. Without the old-school nationalism of Bevill, the scientists come to choose the defence of their country, though they contribute to the death of thousands of innocent victims. Luke puts it this way: "Either/or, said Luke.

Either you retired and helped to leave your country defenceless. Or you made a weapon which might burn men, women, and children in tens of thousands. What was a man to do?" (The New Men, I66). The moral dilemma of the scientists does not allow an easy solution. In the end, the decision for the Bomb's dropping was made by 'our masters' in another country, but the British scientists had still contributed information. And in the end, Eliot reports what Martin, as scientist, says: "science—though maybe not in his lifetime—would turn out for good" (The New Men, 229).

For someone like Edgar Hankins, who has been brought up in a humanist and traditional Britain, scientists are the "'new foreigners'" (The New Men, I77). They share seemingly little of the values of a humanist tradition, perhaps because they wish to build the future in their image. Eliot says: "Luke knew no history" (The New Men, I8I). And of the centre of the nuclear experiments, he sees, instead of a vision of the future, a "relic of a civilization far gone in decay" (The New Men, 26). Without a vision of the past and with an uncertain vision of the future, the scientists attempt to define themselves in relation to non-scientists. At the heart of their charter or sense of values is a belief in the moral rightness of their science. All else, nationalism not least, should be subordinate to the latter-day truths of science. Even though Martin has thrown in his lot with those who are building the Bomb to fight against Hitler and to have the Bomb before some maniac has it, he is

able to understand the split loyalties of someone like Sawbridge. "Science had its own imperatives" (The New Men, 195).

Essentially, the scientists see themselves in relation to others, including any organization, in moral terms. For this reason, politics, as a set of ideals, is for many their next passion after science. In a sense, it becomes a vehicle for the moral issues of their work. It may be for some an escape from the consequences of their work on the Bomb. On the one hand, they are able to take satisfaction in their handiwork as physicists, on the other, they are able to find release of their tensions in varying shades of political dissent. Some who had worked on the Bomb saw in its completion "a not unpleasurable, a self-congratulatory awe" (The New Men, 129). But most do not hide behind politics, but face the contradictions and expediency of their situation, with some hope for the future--through political as well as scientific solutions. "Often they were sick at heart, although despair was unnatural to them and they believed that the split in the world--the split which seemed to them the anti-hope--would not last for ever" (The New Men, 164). Some, like Mounteney, are not content merely to state their position, but assume the role of teacher. No longer are poets the legislators of the world, but, as Mounteney would have it, scientists are now best able to deal with how scientific decisions should be used.

To do so, however, means that scientists would have

to utilize the administrative tools of the managers. Scientists, the anti-bureaucrats, would have to speak, some of the time, the language of the managers. They are 'anti-bureaucrats', because in behavior and in attitude they differ from the culture of other professionals. "The room was noisy, as the scientists sat themselves at the desks, one or two banging the lids, like a rowdy class at school. Most of them wore open-necked shirts, one or two were in shorts" (The New Men, I36). Their manner is slapdash in contrast to the decorum of the managers. But when necessary, for the sake of science and not for the sake of any organization, they are able to speak the language of the organization. They do so, not as an end in itself, as it appears to be for 'organization men' like Bevill and Rose, but as a means to the scientists' end.

On the surface, the scientists know and practise the ins and outs of committee-existence: "No body of men could have sounded less introspective; as their new Chairman said, with the jubilation of a headmaster who sees the second eleven at the nets, they were the keenest committee he had ever had" (The New Men, I66). But in a way, they are the Trojan Horse in the committee rooms. For their sense of values remains constant, and their criticism of outsiders is no less sharp-edged. They learn the tricks of a bureaucrat's trade without the adoption of his rationale. Although they take their part on committees to ensure that they shall have as much money as necessary for the advancement of their science as well as for the advancement of their personal ambitions, much

of their participation is to ensure their moral say. At one and the same time, they cooperate with the goals of the organization and oppose them. Eliot, Martin, and Francis Getliffe share the view that: "all societies had their secrets--any society which permitted its secrets to be stolen was obsolescent--we could not let it happen" (The New Men, 175). Yet, Mounteney, in a different mood, expresses the feeling of many scientists in talking back to the civil servants:

> 'It would have been more honest if you had all come here in uniform,' he said to me.
> He meant that the government was favouring the forces at the expense of science (The New Men, 47).

Except for the engineers, like Pearson, who are closer to the 'organization men' than they are to the physicists, few of the scientists can remain for long in dialogue with those who hold the purse strings in Whitehall. They are not, on the organizational chart, of the same mind or heart. Martin says that the dropping of the second Bomb "'must have been for purposes of comparison'" (The New Men, 154). In a cry, more outraged, Martin says to Eliot:

> 'There was a good deal of discussion,' he said, 'about how to drop it with maximum results. One ingenious idea was to start a really spectacularly pretty fire a few seconds before the bomb went off.'
> 'Why,'
> 'To make sure that everyone in the town was looking up.'
> 'Why?'
> 'To make sure they were all blinded.' (The New Men, 154).

Perhaps part of the alarm of the scientists is the bigness of events, which multiply the already existing complications and which a bureaucrat, like Hector Rose, is also able to feel. In the end,

for the scientists at any rate, there is not the same response of 'business as usual' as there is for the bureaucrats, but a question for which there does not seem to be an answer. Luke asks: "'what else could chaps like me do?'" (The New Men, 181).

The personal ambitions of the scientists are not markedly different from those of the civil servants. The only difference is that for some of the scientists the pursuit of excellence in their skills and in their knowledge as professionals may carry at least the same weight with them as the wish for power. But when it comes to a draw, the scientists are able to hold their own in a bid for personal advancement. Drawbell, for example, is more Machiavellian than the most ruthless of bureaucrats: "He gave a cheerful, malevolent chuckle. One could tell how he enjoyed using his power, keeping his assistants down to their proper level, dividing and ruling" (The New Men, 38). Indeed, the same wish for power in a scientist, put side by side his implied role of moral teacher, makes him seem somewhat less of a human being and more of a career man, both on and off the job. That is how Eliot sees his brother, for a part of the story, and, up to a point, that is how Eliot encourages his brother to be. Eliot cautions Martin's wife on how to appear to behave as a professional man's wife: "'Unless you want to damage his career, the least you can do for Martin is behave yourself on the outside'" (The New Men, 33). Gradually Martin responds to the lure of power, and the more he does so the

less completely human he becomes: "Even when he paid his tribute to Luke he had a double motive, he had one eye on his own future" (The New Men, 185); "He didn't have friends, but he had colleagues" (The New Men, 210); "Was he just going to look on human existence as a problem in logistics?" (The New Men, 210). In the end, however, unlike the bureaucrats, Martin does come round to the rejection of power for its own sake and to the acceptance of more humanist values.

Bureaucracy, Eliot seems to be saying, is the sometimes unfriendly giant. It distorts and constricts right and honest feelings between people, in personal relations as well as in the dimension of departmental affairs. Bureaucracy, however, like the Bomb, may not be the final cause or end of an injured sensibility, but the fiction that Snow uses to dramatize better the disruption in personal values between people. Or, it may be the opposite: the break in ordinary relations between people may only dramatize better the presence of bureaucracy among men and women. In succeeding chapters, I shall try to focus more clearly on this problem by a contrast of the personal lives of the characters with their public lives.

Chapter Four

In his novels The Light and the Dark and Homecomings, Snow gives greater weight to the personal lives of the characters, though the sequence of action is the same as in The New Men. Both The Light and the Dark and Homecomings give a more complete picture of the personal life of a bureaucrat: first, when Lewis Eliot experiences close friendship; and second, when he experiences the loss and gain of love through marriage. The Light and the Dark tells the story of Roy Calvert, a man who lives outside of bureaucracy. By contrast, therefore, the reader is able to focus better on the formal organization and on Lewis Eliot as he lives his life with Roy Calvert. Homecomings makes demands on Lewis Eliot to give himself totally to another person and the experience of this in contrast to his official life.

Unlike the traditional view of marriage as a social contract between husband and wife, in The New Men and in the two other novels that we are considering, marriage turns on a personal expression of love or the absence of love between the marriage partners. It is seen as a consequence of the sexual union and of the feelings of love that preceded marriage. Another dimension emerges, however, in the children of the marriage. But even in family life, we do not have the social or sacramental fulfilment of the marriage union, as in the novels of D.H. Lawrence, but rather a fulfilment of one of the marriage partners through

the child.

Lewis's first marriage shows this dramatically. His wife, Sheila Knight, suffered acute depression well before her marriage to Eliot and then agreed to marry him finally, being unable to receive any understanding of herself from psychiatrists or from anyone else. Eliot alone is willing to take care of her and love her, as she is, without any return of love. Yet such an arrangement suited Eliot's own sense of loneliness: he could give without the absolute necessity for any return. After his marriage the arrangement continues, but his wife's depression worsens so that the estrangement that existed between them even before their marriage deepens also. It deepens to an extent that his wife is nearly totally unable to deal with ordinary human relations, and Eliot, instead of finding fulfilment of himself through marriage, suffers a loneliness all the more painful.

The loneliness that resulted from his marriage was made even more so by the absence of children: "The hall was brilliantly lit, pernicketily tidy, the hall of a childless couple."[I] Because of his temperament and the suffering through his marriage, he seeks some escape from inner loneliness in

[I] C.P. Snow, Homecomings, (Harmondsworth, 1963), p. 12. Subsequent references will be to this edition.

his personal relations with the life and career of his brother and in his friendship with Roy Calvert. Eliot himself rarely speaks of his own sufferings through marriage; he is mainly concerned with the strains and difficulties in his brother's marriage. In doing so, he may be speaking of his own: "the consideration, the imaginative sympathy, in which I had failed."[2] He isolates himself from himself in the interests of his wife, even if his career suffers: "trying to look after her, I had broken my career" (Homecomings, I4). But when his wife commits suicide, one of his first thoughts is: "I was afraid that her suicide might do me harm" (Homecomings, 70). Yet this need not disillusion us about his earlier self-sacrifice; it means that his working life has filled this solitude.

Indeed, his life thereafter until his second marriage centers about his career. He becomes 'married to his work'. Only in a second marriage is he able to resolve inner loneliness and spent energies. In his marriage with Margaret Davidson, Eliot is finally able to give and to take love in a human relationship. Marriage, then, may have the symmetry of union and the promise of the partners' fulfilment in one another.

> As a child I had not taken a sorrow to my mother, I had kept my sorrows from her, I had protected her from them. When I first loved I found, and it was not an accident, someone so self-bound that another's sorrows did not exist.
>
> But with Margaret they existed, they were at the core of our marriage: if I kept them from her, if I did not need her, then we had failed. (Homecomings, 3II).

[2] C.P. Snow, The New Men, (Harmondsworth, I963), p. 60. Subsequent references will be to this edition.

The two solitudes of husband and wife are brought out, though not as dramatically, in the marriage of Martin and Irene. In contrast to the extreme caution of Martin's power-plays as a professional on-the-make, his marriage was an apparent abandon of common sense: "none of us had made a wilder marriage" (The New Men, 49). Before long, Irene is seriously thinking of returning to her one-time lover, Edgar Hankins. Neither before nor after their marriage is there any evident union of love. Each lives his and her life alone. Lewis says of Irene: "to me she sounded too much like a shabby-smart girl, who thought her best chance was to find an able husband" (The New Men, 7). She married Martin for protection or security, and when she discovered that Martin no longer needed her, as she had once believed, she found herself at a loss to continue in their relationship. Because each lives to himself and to herself, neither can begin to understand the other: "once she felt part of Martin's love had slipped away, she was losing her confidence" (The New Men, 131). But when one or both do make an effort to share the solitude of the other, particularly in the life of their child, husband and wife are able to accept better their limitations. "'While Martin doesn't need me--he could get on without me or anyone else, but he wants me!'" (The New Men, 221).

Most of those marriage partners who are in love as completely as a man and a woman are able to be usually suffer a disability of career or of personality. Such is true of the Drawbells and Pearsons. After Drawbell has placed all his hopes

and dreams to obtain a knighthood and has failed, he and his wife come closer together to support one another. Although Pearson is described as one of the best engineers on the nuclear project, he lacks human understanding. Yet his marriage was 'surprised by joy'. The inverse of Eliot and Martin is true for Drawbell and Pearson: because both had a hollowness in an area of their life outside marriage, their marriages filled that void. Whereas for Eliot and Martin, the void of their first experience of marriage made their careers and other human relations successful and satisfactory. Luke, alone, succeeds in both career and personal life.

Sex, both in and out of marriage, underlines the solitude of two individuals, since love relations emphasize the intimacy of the characters. In The New Men, where the conduct of affairs and the advancement of careers may be the surface reality, the role of sex matches these machinations and, perhaps, their superficiality as well. Here sex is not far removed from the game of power plays: "Hankins was one of those men, and they are not uncommon, who invest much emotion in the pursuit of women without having the nature for it" (The New Men, 221). There are norms and values of sexual behavior, as there are norms and values of bureaucratic behavior: of Irene, "whose first instinct was to be ready to get a smile out of me or any other man" (The New Men, 158); of Luke, "he was sexually a genuinely humble man" (The New Men, 52). Sex in The New Men, as in the other

novels of the Strangers and Brothers series, is not treated with the same intimacy of detail as in D.H. Lawrence. Though it matters very much in the personal lives of the characters, it is a sign principally, as Lewis Eliot observes of others, of achievement in their career lives. Physical prowess, as exemplified in sex and in physique, is a mark of esteem that carries over into the public lives of the characters.

In The Light and the Dark and Homecomings much of the personal lives of the characters is reflected in the role of sex. In the closest of human relations, sex shows mainly the isolation of two individuals in a relationship. The crisis of Eliot and his wife is brought out further: "she did not love me when I passionately loved her. That meant that she had power over me, and I none over her" (Homecomings, I3); "(as our marriage went on, it was false to speak of making love, for about it there was, though she did not often refuse me, the one-sidedness of rape)" (Homecomings, 37). Although the importance of the sex bite is not overlooked, the heart of the sexual union, whether it may ever be realized, is the total fulfilment of the lives of the man and woman in one another. For this reason, Eliot could, if he wished, have Margaret Davidson as his mistress, but, instead, chooses to accept the full meaning of being in love with another. "I was thinking how perfectly it would suit me to have her as my mistress, a relation which would give me the secretive joy I doted on, make no new claims on me, leave me not struggling any more to reshape my life" (Homecomings, 237).

In The Light and the Dark the solitude of the man and woman in sexual union is more intense. The novel centers about the life and struggles of Roy Calvert, who, to relieve his inner turmoil, attempts to find a measure of solace in sex. The high tension of love-making suits the tension of his nature and is an attempt on Roy's part to come to terms with himself. As he shares the sex act, he intends both to know himself and at the same time to share the life of another. Although he is able to take whatever pleasure he can find in sex, he is unable to know in any measure his own turmoil or even to reach beyond the sensuousness of the moment to know the other. At best, he is only able to know feelings of camaraderie: "for Rosalind he felt the special animal tenderness that comes from physical delight, and he would not consent to see her humiliated among those who hated her."[3] As Roy tells Eliot, the truth is:

> 'We're all alone, aren't we? Each one of us. Quite alone.' He asked: 'Old boy---how does one reach another human being?'
> 'Sometimes one thinks one can in love.'
> 'Just so,' he said. After a time, he added:
> 'Yet, sometimes after I've made love, I've lain with someone in my arms and felt lonelier than ever in my life.' (The Light and the Dark, I37).

Unlike human relations of marriage and sex, human relations of family life, as seen by one member of a family, are as near a state of harmony as can be. As Eliot's mother saw him, he was

[3] C.P. Snow, The Light and the Dark, (Harmondsworth, I965), p. II3. Subsequent references will be to this edition.

the fulfilment for the moment and the hope for the future. Eliot, more than Martin, was for her the promise of a better life and a rise in fortune and social standing: "my mother had tried to relive her life in me; And I had not been able to return that kind of love" (The New Men, 235). As can happen, however, in family relations the affection may be largely on one side only. On the one hand, the child or children will be a means of unity to the relations between husband and wife; on the other, the one-sidedness of the affection may isolate the parent all the more in a solitude of his or her own making. Even if this is true, however, the risk is worth the return of joy that the child brings. Whatever reserve there may have been between Martin and Irene, their child, for Martin especially, is the source of a give and take of feeling. "He smiled at the child with a love more open than he ever showed for his wife" (The New Men, 64). In Martin's child, Lewis is able to see Irene more kindly than he once was able to see her: "she was a better mother than many people were willing to believe" (The New Men, 70). For Eliot especially, his own child is the meaning of life, and as he sees his child so he sees the world. In a moment of crisis in his child's health: "so I wanted the danger to my son to hang over everyone round me: if he was not safe, then no one should be: if he should die, then so should the rest" (Homecomings, 309). Only as the child grows up does the magic of childhood for the parent begin to become dulled and the solitude of the man, in a Wordsworthian sense, begin to

mark the relationship between parent and child. So Mr. Knight, who suffered in his daughter's adulthood, says to Eliot: "'you may be one of those parents whose children bring them happiness'" (Homecomings, 280).

The "brothers' love" (The New Men, II) of Lewis and of Martin Eliot is an example of a change of relations in a family as the members grow up. And an example also of members of a family who, as in other human relations, must come to terms with the solitude or individuality of each human being. Lewis, as the elder brother, is protective towards Martin and continues in this attitude after both are adults. But Lewis is unwilling to accept fully the different human being that Martin is. On Lewis's part, Martin's marriage and his careerism offend the sense of protection that Lewis continues to feel towards Martin and of Lewis's own sense of values. At first Lewis is unable to like Irene, Martin's wife, and tends to sustain in his own imagination criticism, though in some ways justified, of her. Although at first Lewis encourages Martin to seek his personal advancement, even if he should have to promote the nuclear project, he is later shocked by the self-seeking of Martin at the expense of others. On Martin's part, Lewis's concern for him is over-concern and may not be without its own self-seeking ends. Lewis tells Martin:

> 'I have wanted a good deal for you,' I said.
> 'No,' he said. 'You have wanted a good deal for yourself.' (The New Men, 210).

Martin feels, and feels rightly, that Lewis is unwilling to accept the necessity of a somewhat changed relationship in adulthood. The tension that results dramatizes in slow motion the conflict of self-interest between individuals.

From Lewis's point of view, the relationship is one of intimacy that neither of them can find elsewhere. The worldly success of anyone else would have nagged him, but towards Martin's success Lewis can have no ill-feeling. Of anyone else, Lewis would have known: "a splinter of rancour--the jag of the question: 'Why hasn't this happened to me'" (The New Men, 104). Neither career nor his own personal ties is able to interfere with the feelings that he has for his brother. But as the changed reality of brotherly relations becomes clearer to him, he begins to reevaluate his relation to Martin in terms of one human being to another.

> If you identify yourself in another, however tough the tie between you, he cannot feel as you do, and then you go through (you who have been living your life in another) a state for which the old Japanese found a name, which they used to describe the sadness of a parent's love: a darkness of the heart. (The New Men, 235).

In coming to a realization of each other's separate humanity, there can be some measure of restoration of their former closeness and a working basis for some measure of one individual knowing another.

Yet even when there is the chance of a person-to-person relationship, the social system stands as much as possible in the way of it. Class, even when it means class loyalties, is divisive towards another group, though it may strengthen the ties of the former. And though social status is a means of self-integrity in

the face of economic or social crisis, it may also be a blind by which a person isolates himself further from the lives of those around him. Eliot hardly introduces any character without referring to his or her social background and bank balance. He speaks of the poverty of his childhood and the want of his young adulthood; of Luke: "the Plymouth dockyard where he was brought up" (The New Men, 22); Captain Smith was the son of a bishop; of Roy: "(his father was a very wealthy man in the provincial town where I was born)" (The Light and the Dark, I2); "they were Bevills and the family had been solidly noble since the sixteenth century (which is a long time for a genuine descent)" (The Light and the Dark, I8); and so on. Eliot and others may flirt with the customs and mannerism of another class, but like sex, when you are born into one class you live with it always.

As a possible contrast to what may be the unnaturalness in the lives of the characters, Eliot makes frequent references to plant life in The New Men and in some of the other novels in the series, Strangers and Brothers. For in the world-view of Lewis Eliot, the unnatural or irrational comes to the surface in the self-proclaimed realism of himself and others. He may be pointing to the contradiction in human behavior, in his at any rate, between the implied rationale of a realist, who lives by secrecy or power plays, and the loss or injury to 'natural' human feelings of friendship and love. Just as an ulcer comes muddily through as

the unwritten poem or the unfelt feeling, so for Lewis Eliot superstition comes through in lieu of irrationality. In a dangerous world where hardly anyone can be quite trusted or quite loved, the unknown or fate has to be reckoned with and appeased. "Hanna Puchwein inquired about Martin's fate" (The New Men, 58); "I was thinking, if you wanted a job, don't be ill: for it had an almost superstitious effect, even on men as hard-headed as these; somehow, if you were ill, your mana was reduced" (The New Men, 214); of walking under a ladder: "As I went under, I could feel Martin hesitate and then take three quick steps round. He said, with a sarcastic smile: 'I need all the luck I can get'" (The New Men, 92).

The "light and dark" (The Light and the Dark, 324) of Roy Calvert dramatize the uneasy tension between the rational and irrational in humankind. Though gifted with intellect, trust, and money, he is unable to know himself fully or to find any meaning in his life. He attempts to seek absolute answers: first, in a belief in God, and secondly, in the might of the state. Neither is able to give him the peace that he seeks. He does not seek an ideology in which to believe, but the authority behind the ideology so that he can lose himself in something greater than his turmoil. Nor does work or sex or friendship take him enough out of himself. In the end, he must face the apparent irrationality of his consciousness that may, for all he knows, represent the rational in man. The horror of the world's cruelty

disturbs him greatly and hardly gives him any hope for a better world, except for a few acts of goodness in men's lives. Finally, he uses war as an excuse for death and an escape from the prison of his consciousness.

In the best of times and in the best of situations, so Eliot seems to be saying, there is only a margin of happiness in human relations. In The New Men, this may be what the long haul of being human means.

Chapter Five

Having considered the public lives and the personal lives of the characters, I think that we may now be in a stronger position to resolve the central problem of our thesis. We asked at the end of chapter three: Is the subject of The New Men the disruption created by bureaucracy in the lives of men, or is bureaucracy being viewed as an effect of the general absence of values in the relations of men in their private lives? I suggest that a means to understand the heart of this matter would be to consider the character and role of Lewis Eliot.

Eliot, as narrator, both tells the story and interprets the stuff of which the story and the motives and nature of the characters are constituted. Through his vision the reader comes to know the life story and characters. If we know bureaucracy to be a certain way of life or the reasons for men to be as they are, then it is because Eliot sees them that way. It may be, of course, that Eliot gives us an objectively true insight into the characters in the series of novels, Strangers and Brothers. But the alternative could be that, though Eliot has the controlling voice of the novel, the reader cannot take him at his word. What he says would perhaps be as valid, or as invalid, as what any of the other characters might say for themselves, if they had a voice of their own. But if this second alternative were true, the system of values that Eliot voices in his person in relation

to the Bomb would be questionable and the argument of the novel would in the same way be questionable. Instead, I believe that the argument is sustained throughout because Eliot, as narrator, speaks the truth. If credibility is on his side in one area of the novel's argument, it is likely to be in others, if the vision that Eliot has is the same that the novelist has in his argument and characterization. The way the world is, then, is the way that Lewis Eliot is.

If Eliot has the true voice of the novel, does he have the same role of omniscient narrator as in a novel like Tom Jones? And, who is his audience? Unlike the narrator of Tom Jones, Eliot plays his part in the novels, so that when he comments and sometimes judges, he takes the blame and credit as well as the other characters. Indeed, his main concern most of the time seems to be an understanding of himself in relation to others and to situations. He describes the workings of his own imagination, and from this standpoint he comes to know a world other than himself. He, and only a few others who intimately share his life, such as Martin, share a sense of recrimination for wrong feeling and the resolution to feel differently and rightly. Because his criticism of bureaucracy is as harsh as it is, it would seem to follow that those who are also in the situation of bureaucracy would receive as equally severe criticism as he gives to himself in the situation of bureaucracy. But what criticism others receive merely deflects from the main criticism that he speaks to himself. His narration has to do so much with himself that it takes the form largely of a diary, with conversation

interpolated. In this way, he is able to voice better, in answer to those outside himself, his view of the world. The compunction that Eliot feels within himself adds clarity of vision and objective truth in relation to his subjective point of view.

In the sequence of novels, Strangers and Brothers, Eliot is shown from his childhood to have possessed a social and economic awareness. In Time of Hope, the financial hardship of his parents, which he recalls in the subsequent novels, pressures him to think of economic advantage. The family becomes dependent to a degree on the generosity of an aunt, who is herself aware of the social circumstances of those who have and of those who have not. The response of Eliot's mother to the change of family fortune is that of reinforced snobbishness, so that she becomes overly sensitive to the nuances of social standing in the community. At the very time that it becomes evident to all that her husband has suffered a setback in his finances, Eliot's mother takes her place as usual with him in her accustomed pew in the church, a sign of social and economic acceptance. In spite of the family's misfortune, she continues to make her contribution to parish meetings and committees for sales-of-work.

Eliot, as a bright student at school, is encouraged by his mother to continue his education so that he will be among men of solid reputation and substantial income. At the same time, he is made to feel economic pressure, by his aunt and by the social system, in his desire to continue his education. As it turns out,

he is only able to go so far with his formal schooling, at this point in the sequence of novels, and begins to work after his father has died to support his mother, himself, and his younger brother. At this early stage of his life, as Eliot subsequently recalls in The New Men and in other novels, he, and Martin as well, acquire a family sense towards their immediate circle of relations. Eliot also acquires a conscience that makes him sensitive to injustice in his society and sensitive to the presence of others, in their personal relations as well as in their careers.

The friends that Eliot makes in young adulthood widen his vision of life and of the world. He begins to study law in his provincial town, widen his circle of friends to include the upper middle class, those to the left in politics with a social conscience, and the first love of his life, Sheila Knight, who is to become his wife. He becomes enamoured with the exchange of ideas, leftist politics, and the world of solid men and of substantial income, that his mother first wanted for him. Later he goes to Cambridge on a scholarship to continue his studies in law, where he grows in worldly wisdom and experience. For a time, as The Masters documents, he is a Cambridge don where he is able to exercise his powers of observation and learn of the workings of high affairs in a college common room. Eliot continues to advance his career by becoming a consultant

to an industrial firm in London and by beginning his relationship with Whitehall. In a move to advance his career even further, he leaves Cambridge to cultivate his interests as a civil servant. This brings us to The New Men.

Throughout Eliot's activities, though he is frequently in the centre of affairs, he remains an observer--and as we have now seen, an observer of the objective world. Like the writer that he believes it is his destiny to be, his is a contemplative role in life. He develops those powers of observation that are to shape his imagination and that enable him to develop habits of shrewdness and decision-making. In externals, he bears the appearance of his colleagues in Whitehall, in his discretion and application to office work, but in his heart he is one with the scientists. His instincts are to act with the same moral conscience that the physicists have in The New Men. In The Affair, for example, he acts out of his own sense of justice in defending a latter-day Dreyfus.

Against this background of career he lives his life. Each of the novels in the series, Strangers and Brothers, is both a resumé of his inner life from childhood and a new phase or area of his life and career. The New Men contains these two elements. It is lived in terms of the boy and man that he was. Each act in his career life is analysed and understood in terms of a set of experiences in his personal life over the years.

Although, like most of humanity, he works because he has to make a living and because he likes to exercise his wits and share the company of others, behind the particular acts of his work is a pattern of feeling. In those areas of his career which he objects to, as we examined them in chapter three, are underlying reasons, as we examined them in chapter four. His discomfort with the large organization, his abhorence of some of the manifestations of it, such as secrecy, and his abhorence of some of the consequences of the state machine, such as the Bomb, correspond to a way of feeling and thinking in his personal life. As Eliot is so he sees the world.

Central to Eliot's world-view is a solitude that he feels between himself and the world outside himself. For this reason, perhaps, he is particularly sensitive to any sign of alienation between the individual and his humanity. Clearly, the Bomb more than alienates. But the case against the formal organization is not as clear. There need not be a conflict of public and personal interests for those who spend their working lives in a larger organization any more than for those in a less complex organization. Because Eliot feels the way that he does about bureaucracy, his feelings of frustration and fear may reflect a reality in another area of his life. The more than strained relations that he feels in his personal life until his second marriage and his more adult understanding with his brother may be seen reflected in the sometimes fragmented relations that

he feels exist within departments of a bureaucracy. The means of achieving an end in bureaucracy, however, become for him often an indictment of the system. The real world, then, is not, as Eliot would see it, the 'sometimes unfriendly giant of bureaucracy', but the world of Lewis Eliot. It may even be that if there is any notion of the microcosm in the novel, the lesser part is not so much the consciousness of the individual as bureaucracy itself. Bureaucracy is the microcosm or reflection of the imagination's inner life, the true life of the novel. And because it is, it is appropriate that the narration of the novel should be in the voice of one of the characters, the true voice of the novel.

Yet the reality of the inner life of the characters does not lessen the realness of the experience that bureaucracy registers on the pulse of Eliot and on the other characters, but transforms it into the experience of the characters. Bureaucracy is no more an abstraction, in itself, than Plato's table is. Snow looks outward so that he can see better inward. And because of the insight that he has from this dual perception, he is able, through his characters, to look anew that more perceptively at conditions, even the social organizations which contain the human condition. The art of C.P. Snow is in this total definition of his humanism.

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