

Not only are tax-supported schools immoral in the same way that all forceful extractions of funds are immoral, laws which compel attendance at state schools or schools approved by the state provide an immoral and an unjust condition. Also, the laws which prevent young people from obtaining jobs without state permission are immoral and wholly destructive of the family influence.

Philosophers have long observed that the rights of individual men are frequently eroded by the state. What has not been so generally understood is that the family itself is in process of undergoing a metamorphosis, inspired by state controls and the changing status of women. The family unit is the incubator for human character; the state is the incubator for human dependency. The state is a pretender to the role of character builder, and the family has asquiesced. Human values and human purpose can be destroyed by a kind of ersatz culture developed through state dependency. The vulnerable point may turn out to be, not the individual, but the family, the single most important organization of individual men.

The family is the cradle of individualism and the basic unit of every culture. In spite of changes in family relationships, the family will endure.

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The Family

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① 1965-published

Revolt in the Family

WHILE MOST OF US have been more or less engrossed in the political revolutionary trends of our times, there has been a quiet revolution proceeding in our midst with far-reaching results, the full extent of which cannot today even be grasped.

As we have concentrated on the threats of communism, another more peaceful, less dramatic, but far more significant change has been occurring right under our noses. This change relates to the basic unit of society, the family. There has been a family revolution which may, before another century passes, prove to be far more important than all the wars and political stratagems of the age of Einstein, television and space travel.

From the earliest of times, men have banded themselves together in groups. Authorities in the field differ as to the chronological order of these groups. All agree that men have lived in clans, tribes, gens or phratries. Thru it all, however, the family has either emerged or survived and today there is no organization in the world half so important.

Lenin, Stalin and Mao have, each in turn, attempted to stamp out the family relationship. Plato considered it demeaning and argued in favor of the state rearing the children and assuming all responsibility for the little ones from the age of two. Marx considered the family as the breeding ground of capitalistic lust and sought to inspire a general public school system which would remove parental authority, replacing it by the kindly ministrations of politically appointed specialists.

Kings and witch doctors, potentates and priests have tried to devise some means whereby the family unit would serve their purposes; the children could be conditioned as political and military units, or lacking these results, the family could be abolished in favor of something resembling universal togetherness, a kind of homogenous brotherhood with the state cast in the role of pater familias.

The family has endured all of these assaults. Lenin and Stalin were forced to recant. Mao has back-tracked and his bachelor barracks have been rejected. Social reformers may still dream starry-eyed of Plato's Republic, but the practical fact is that the family has managed in spite of all.

Yet, for all its enduring qualities, the family unit in recent years has undergone a metamorphosis which has still to run its full course.

To begin with, in almost the entire world, the father image was the central force within the family structure. In Roman times the father was a tyrant, legally empowered to put any member of his own family to death if so it pleased him. In pre-Roman times the patriarchal image molded the unit. Father's word was law in a total sense. The unit formed about him, consisting of one or more wives, one or more children, all in awe of him,

The basic economic and contractual unit of any society is the family. Theorists have been critical of it, exaggerating its weaknesses. In spite of modern pressures, the family is likely to endure. It is the matrix of individualism, the cornerstone of liberty.

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often in terror, sometimes in love. Thus the family formed, with father the centrifugal center, all other members mere whirling satellites.

But, in the western world, and less than half a century ago, women threw off male shackles, not only of fathers but of uncles, husbands, brothers and lovers. Once considered a chattel, the woman has emerged triumphant into a new era of freedom for herself. And as is the case with any other unit in a changing society, the emergence from thralldom, even partially, has produced new stresses and strains which the newly freed have difficulty in comprehending and mastering.

Within the past century, woman's status has changed from being valued because of what she could do, to being valued because of what she is. A few generations ago little girls were trained to be useful; to sew, to cook, to make beds and wash dishes.

Today, this is all changed. Little girls learn to use make-up and practice the seductive arts at an early age. They may never learn to cook or sew. But they learn how to flatter men, how to capitalize on their femininity, and they learn when to cry and how best to manage others to obtain their own way.

The effect of female emancipation upon the family has been profound. It may well be that we will discover, in perspective, that this single feminine achievement has triggered much of the unrest and uncertainty so widely manifest in our modern world.

Breaking Old Ties

The world once made its annual trek about our sun with most people convinced that woman's place was in the home; man's place was in the world; and children should be seen and not heard. This was the family; a tight little corporation shutting away all outsiders, bound together by law, by custom, by love, by fear, by emotional and economic ties, by conditioning, by the human mores as deeply imbedded as wisdom teeth.

Since 1920 the family has gone "modern." No one knows precisely what this means. But in practice, father has become "dad"; the central figure of the group has been replaced by a "democratic" concept.

Father's word is no longer law. Not only does mother ("mom") have as much to say in the reaching of decisions, the children often participate and father succumbs under a sheer weight of numbers and of political organizing which leaves him helpless.

Father still spends the bulk of his time in the world. But mother is now able to organize her time and her objectives, devoting full energy to them. Father's part-time participation in the family is frequently out-classed. Mother has her way, or the children have theirs. Could it be that this development in the family has created uncertainty in the minds of children?

There are contributing factors, too, which at one time might have been held at bay. One of these factors is our governmentally dominated school system, whereby familial as well as paternal influence is reduced still further. The government schools, filled with big-government and big-money ideas, put poor father in the shade. His earnings are taxed to create day-time palaces for his children. His residual income is channeled where mom wants it to go. His voice grows increasingly weak and impotent. Unrest and dissatisfaction surround him.

Eighty per cent of the American bread-winners cannot afford to buy the "house beautiful," the latest in modern gadgetry, and at the same time provide for a future of secure tho modest self-reliance. So government is looked to, even by the one-time lord of all he surveyed.

It may well be that research and study will confirm that the rise of government has paralleled the decline of the old style family.

Freedom, for women as well as men, is a dangerous adventure. This is one of the reasons freedom is so important and so often misunderstood. All too frequently, a taste of freedom by a slave inspires, not a love of freedom, but a lust for power. Women, emerging from their earlier and wholly unjust status, have not been entirely able to withstand the temptations inherent in their personal liberty. The family unit reveals this problem.

There was once a period when families helped to cement their ties of love and understanding by a gathering in which father (sometimes mother) read aloud some of the great ideas and moving concepts which have made life meaningful on this planet. Today, there is probably not one family in a thousand which shares a good book and the ideas it contains. But there is a score of new methods for amusing and entertaining family members in idleness. Television captures the imagination but it consumes the time of its devotees.

The children are equipped with motor vehicles almost as soon as their reflexes indicate mechanical competence. They roam where they will.

The family unit now centers around a closet full of clothes and the plumbing facilities. The unit, organized originally around an object of centrifugal force, is now becoming centripetal. Schools, clubs, parties, political organizations and the government itself provide rivalry from the attractions the home once held.

The relative value of each member of the family to every other member has thus gone into decline. Problems used to be discussed, probably right after dinner, with all members of the family participating. The practice still persists in some cases but is dying out. If a discussion does ensue, it is mother-oriented.

Adventure seems to beckon outside the home and each member of the unit tugs at all restraints until he can run free. The children seek an early exodus. The "folks" belong to another generation and are not interesting.

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The Family Against the State

The evolution of the family unit in our society from one which was originally father-oriented to one which is now group-oriented, is having a far-reaching effect upon other activities and events in our social structure. Nor can we simply class the change as "bad," the old-style family as "good" and call for a return of the "good old days."

In all too many cases of old, the father image was the image of a tyrant. No voice or combination of voices could put him down. Men are not equipped by nature to exercise authority over others justly and at the same time by force. The rebellion, so long in coming, was indeed justified in certain cases.

But the newly won freedom of women has often created not a better understanding within the family but merely a new kind of tyranny. The despotism of brute force or the withholding of economic sanction has frequently been replaced by a despotism of willfulness, caprice, perfume and crafty manipulation. Nature has endowed women with superior weapons when she cares to use them. Force has never been the equal of cunning.

However, there are advances which have been made by the family, and in those many instances where women have understood the meaning of their freedom great gains have been made. There is now a larger tendency for true companionship; if not around the solid ideas and the great thoughts of men, at least the companionship has a physical reality and an understanding which was difficult to acquire with father cast in the role of a minor yet omnipotent deity.

There is greater opportunity for a demonstration of personal affection. Experiences are shared, and the young people gain insight in the realm of making decisions for themselves. Mutual trust and confidence can inspire a marvelous willingness of children to assume grown-up responsibilities. But much of this is now in the hands of mothers whereas at one time the total burden was the father's load alone.

What may be in the making is an entirely new kind of family relationship. We surmise that it may evolve when both mother and father have a greater grasp of the meaning of freedom and responsibility, when full-scale individual self-reliance is sought and lauded.

Standing in the way of such emergence is the state, which, in this period of familial flux, has grown to such mammoth proportions that the father image has been transferred to Washington. Ultimate decisions which may affect each family in a very personal and lasting way are now being made in Congress rather than in the home.

Today, every family unit contains an uninvited invisible member. It is the government. Let father or mother try to plan a special treat for their youngsters; the government has intruded by channeling tax money out of their hands, invoking licensing, inspections, fees, regulations and so on, so that the simplest, most wholesome engagement must be approached with craft and guile lest a tax advantage be lost.

The children observe. Father resents paying all the taxes. Mother speeds and cuts around corners without signalling. If a policeman reprimands her, she turns on the charm. The children learn. They learn that father and mother don't always approve of government, but that the government is sometimes on their side and opposed to their parents.

If the family is to survive as the basic unit of society, it will survive only because the family reasserts its authority over itself and rejects the powerful, even if well-meaning, ukases which thunder from the far Olympus of the Potomac and are echoed by local bureaucracies.

In this new struggle against totalitarianism, father, mother and children must stand united. But the first factor to make

their resistance to an enslavement meaningful and telling relates to knowledge and education. Here, the instrument of the state most effective in a possible defeat of the family, is the government control of schools and its influence in education generally. Education and state must be separated.

The great moral crusades of the 16th through the 19th century related frequently to the separation of church and state. The time has come for a new moral crusade that will return the function of education to the family.

The Family and Education

There can be no question that in our earnings and our savings, men of today have less freedom than before. The government has grown so large and overpowering that its forces sweep the land and rupture the carefully nurtured and all-important ties which create the family.

Yet the tyranny exercised over our incomes is not so great as the tyranny exercised over our minds. Isabel Paterson (1) foresaw the situation and called government education, "tyranny naked." It is so.

Men's decisions and actions relate to what they know and believe. If they are conditioned to support the monstrous state, to consider the family as "old-fashioned," and dad and mom "out of date"; if the school becomes the device where-in parental authority and influence are undermined in favor of a species wholly docile and "responsive" to bureaucratic control; then even with our taxes reduced, or cut away entirely in some places, the damage has been done.

The family unit has already demonstrated its ability to survive in spite of communism, in spite of guns and bayonets and laws and regimentation. What is not known is whether the family can regain sufficient tensile strength to withstand the blandishments and the tax-supported lures embodied in a state-supported system of intellectual conditioning. This, as Plato saw and as tyrants since his day have also seen, is the one way in which the state could ultimately attain total control over the human species.

Thus, the problem of our times is to break the chains contained in governmental education and control and to establish, in spite of poverty and taxes, a system of education that will be beyond the power of the state to influence or dominate. While private and independent schools today are a far cry from what they could be, academically speaking they contain the vital elements which can rejuvenate the family and the concepts of individual initiative and self-reliance. Family ties cannot be sustained through educational endeavors which challenge the importance and the supremacy of the family in making personal decisions. We must, whatever the cost, reclaim the educational processes for our families and for ourselves.

We can do this only if we can learn the fundamental immorality of state-supported schools. Not only is the influence of the state immoral in the points of view established and the emphasis provided, the acquisition of the funds is as immoral as can be. If all are taxed to provide education for some, it is an injustice. If some are taxed enormously and others in a minor way to provide education for an elite, it is an injustice. If force is used to get the funds to sustain an educational system, it is only a step away before force will be used to rip the children from the home and to bring them up as public charges of the state. If we accept the doctrine that it is up to the state and up to society to educate, then children are no longer free to live their own lives. They must be nurtured at the public breast so they will fit into the niches which the state can create and provide.

(1) *God of the Machine*, Paterson, Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho, 1964, p. 269.

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