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lish safeguards against "wrong" acts during a crisis. And a question going beyond that is whether we can improve the mechanisms within our system which make it possible to discuss and to correct its weaknesses when there is no crisis. "Hoover Commissions" seem to work for ongoing administrative problems. The Kerner Commission's report, or commissions and task forces on violence, seem harder to act upon. Apparently in the heat of crises such a report simply becomes part of the problem; yet without a crisis we seem disinclined to bother seriously about how to avoid the next one. Our organizations of social scientists could perhaps here fill a gap. In the case under discussion one imagines a commission having been established, say, in 1889 to study and propose constitutional changes suggested by historical experiences with war crises. As I read this book, I can imagine a commission recommending a 30-day cooling-off period before Congress can legally declare war, during which period the commander in chief has the duty and the moral right to do only what is necessary to maintain the military state as it had become established in the crisis. A commission established today could begin its work by speculating on the effect such a limitation would have had at the succeeding moments that we were "re-

membering" the *Maine*, the *Lusitania* and Pearl Harbor and during the Cuban missile crisis.

More difficult than a limitation on power is to build into our system sanctions against the abuse of power that are more effective deterrents than simply the risk of losing a far-off election. Some public officials use what they call their awesome "responsibilities" as a cloak behind which to issue orders that lead to irreversible harm; this may be at any level of our government that involves police power. These are persons who, while demanding that those who want freedom must accept responsibility, have no limits on their own power. A reader of this book—as he thinks about wars that proved unfortunate as well as deadly—might wonder if our society should tolerate "responsibility" with as little immediate accountability as we have. A commission of behavioral scientists might ask whether a mayor or a president, or even a university administrator, would behave *more* responsibly in a crisis if he could expect a quick public judicial procedure if his "calculated risk" came a cropper, and of course how deleterious side effects of such a reform might be avoided.

Sol Tax is professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago

How to Cope with Now

FUTURE SHOCK by Alvin Toffler.

1970, 505 pages, \$7.95

New York: Random House,

Reviewed by Amitai Etzioni

Toffler's book is widely misread. It is not about the future, with its mind-blowing rapid succession of technological breakthroughs and the "shock" they will cause as they threaten our capacity to absorb and react; it is not about the present society, which is already overwhelmed. Rather, Toffler's subject is societal management. He explores the conditions under which man is in charge as opposed to those that lock him in and subject him to forces

he neither understands nor controls. The projected needs of societies in the foreseeable future do not differ basically from the requirements for effective and participatory management of our present society. Consequently, a study of the capacity to manage "the future" has essentially the same agenda as a study of ways to deal with forces affecting our life today.

Toffler, who is as much an essayist as he is a social science popularizer,

writes for effect. He says we will experience a state of shock about the future similar to the culture shock preliterate tribes suffered upon abrupt exposure to Western civilization. He believes, in fact, that we have already been thrown into a shock.

But even if one does not share Toffler's alarm about the rapidity of change around us and is somewhat more confident about our capacity to cope, many of Toffler's suggestions on "how to manage" (he would add "the future") are still of interest.

Personal coping. Toffler prescribes a deliberate slowing of pace in order to reduce our overstimulation. Frantic cocktail parties, jet hopping, frequent changes of home and job—these are all part of what makes life unduly transient for most people. Why not take a new look at each one of these enticements and demands on one's energy? Maybe one can say no to some of them. Toffler further suggests that one not try to handle the strain of being modern all by himself—one should join up with groups of fellow travelers who share the transient situation; we should help one another and not hesitate to draw on professional counseling. Better yet, we should find halfway houses between where we are and where we are going, to soften the transition. When it comes time to retire, one should first cut his working time in half. In general, we should try not to leap, but to step into new worlds.

Societal coping. But, says Toffler, quite correctly, personal adaptations must be accompanied by societal ones. Our educational system must be redone because "what passes for education today, even in our 'best' schools and colleges, is a hopeless anachronism." We need to transform the organization of our schools from one that parallels the factory (and so prepares the student for it) to one more like a lab—full of opportunities for autonomy and self-growth. We should also "revolutionize the curriculum" and encourage a more futuristic orientation. If you read Paul Goodman and Marshall McLuhan, you can fill in the details yourself.

Toffler favors "taming technology" to slow down and humanize the industrial processes. This is to be accomplished by the use of "a broad political grouping rationally com-

mitted to further scientific and technological advance—but on a selective basis only." (I cannot help but agree, having advanced an identical idea in a *Science* article published on 13 September 1968.)

Finally, Toffler proposes a new strategy, which he labels "social futurism." It consists of planning that is concerned more with human values than with efficiency, rationality and economic utilities and is thus more farsighted and more participatory than are current schemes. Goals are no longer to be set by elites or their commissions and staffs, but by the people. The public is to be better informed and would share in goal setting via "social-future assemblies," which would be not unlike updated New England town meetings.

Who will change? Toffler's conceptions of the cybernetic elements of societal guidance are quite valid; he correctly sees a significant role to be played by a more systematic input of knowledge into decision-making bodies and wider use of computers and of modern means of communication in guiding societal processes. But his conception of political processes is innocent, to say the least. Is society naively stumbling into the future like a tribe in a jungle because no Toffler has yet told us that a shocking future is behind the next tree? And now that we have been warned, what do we need in order to revolutionize education, humanize the planners and turn over the power to the people? What makes establishments myopic, and how will they become farsighted? By reading futurology?

As I see it, the society is composed not of elites and masses but of a plurality of groups who command unequal political power, ranging from forceful groups of manufacturers to weak groups of people on relief. The power of each group is determined by numerous factors, including resources, size of membership, level of education, political consciousness, organization and mobilization for political action. The course society steers—within the constraints set by its environment—is largely shaped by the interplay among these various groups. As the various "background" factors that affect the groups' relative power change—as, for instance, education and political skills

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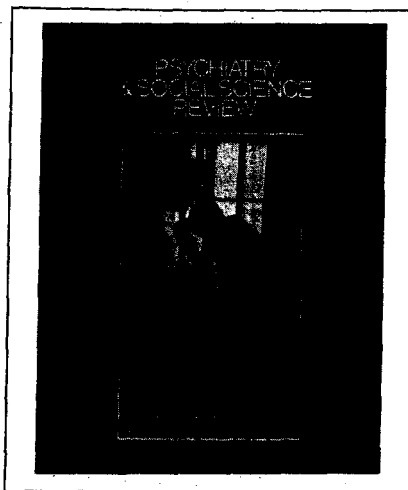
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spread throughout the lower classes and minorities—the relative power profile of the member groupings changes, and so does the course of society. Most “background” factors tend to change slowly, and the mobilization of one group tends to trigger the countermobilization of some others, thus reducing the net change in the power distribution of the total system. Therefore, the redirection of society tends to be gradual. Recognition of this fact does not make for good copy, but it may make for a more accurate social-political analysis.

The same must be said about the observation that most societal changes are not caused by technological breakthroughs but by new political mobilizations and coalitions—they provide the needed energy to fuel major societal reorganization. Our present “crisis” is not so much due to transistors, computers and CATV as it is to the rise and expansion of demands of groups previously kept passive or semi-passive. Minorities, lower classes, women and youngsters have increasingly taken to political action and are now asking for the quality of air, water, health care and education reserved until recently for the upper and upper-middle classes. If the rising groups coalesce, they may make the future ever more responsive to all member groupings of society because the very mobilization of the weak leads to a decrease in the inequality of political power. If these groups who are now making themselves heard will follow their respective sectarian courses, some seeking to out-Vietcong one another,

and others to have more pork chops for themselves without much consideration for other groups, the future will belong to neither. It will be largely the property of the *contemporary* elites, give or take a few thousand planners, cybernetic engineers and Tofflers needed for societal guidance.

Even if one subscribes to a political theory different from the one I just outlined—and agrees with Daniel Bell, John Kenneth Galbraith and Robert Heilbroner, who are more optimistic than I about the prospect of an elite of scientists and other intellect workers (to use Paul Baran's term)—one still must note that without some political conception Toffler's “shock absorbers” are either establishment bumpers, or have to await the revolution before they can be installed. Toffler seems to be unaware that his list of recommendations includes some items, such as the sharing of goal setting, which entail a radical transformation of the polity. Others, such as his advice to reduce one's pace to counter the strain of the system, help to preserve the establishment. While this makes Toffler's book of value both to those who seek to “absorb” the future and to those who seek to form it, both will need to find a way to link his cybernetics to a political conception. Otherwise, it is like a missile without a propellant, and that won't work—even in the future.

Amitai Etzioni is director of the Center for Policy Research and the author of The Active Society (New York: Free Press, 1968).

The First Southern Strategy

FORGING A MAJORITY: THE FORMATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN PITTSBURGH, 1848–1860
by MICHAEL FITZGIBBON HOLT

New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969, 408 pages, \$10.00

Reviewed by Charles O. Jones

No one could recall when the Republicans had last nominated such an attractive and able candidate for mayor of Pittsburgh. The Republicans dared to think they had a chance to win in 1969 with John K. Tabor despite a 3

to 1 Democratic registration advantage. “Tabor the doer” was bright, sincere, energetic, on the move. Even his ads had him running right at you. The traditionally strong Democratic machine could stand a little joust after

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