



We Could Be Losing The **AMERICAN DREAM**

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■ **THE AMERICAN DREAM!** It has been the subject of countless Fourth of July speeches by politicians, Chautauqua orators, and schoolboy declaimers. We studied it in high school, and had no doubt that it was real. Our parents and grandparents lived it. The American Dream was baseball, hot dogs, apple pie, and Chevrolets. It was a whole lot more. It was opportu-

nity, patriotism, moral decency, and a love for liberty. It was the Christian work ethic, self-reliance, and a shared optimism that no matter how tough things got, we could make them better for our children.

These ideals remain. The American Dream still glows in the heads and hearts of millions of Americans, but because of ever bigger govern-



According to the American Dream, by rolling up our sleeves and going to work we might build our own business, have a home and car of our own, provide a college education for our children, and live comfortably on our savings in our declining years. Every aspect of that dream is now under attack by Big Government.

ment it is being clouded by a growing cynicism. Americans are no longer indomitably optimistic as they watch Big Brother not only attacking the American Dream but on the verge of turning it into a nightmare.

Most of those who immigrated to America came because this was at once the land of liberty and economic opportunity. The American Dream included a business of your own. The United States was the land of milk and honey for all who were willing to pay the price in time, toil, and tears. Holding fast to this dream over five generations, our millions of entrepreneurs turned what would today be labeled a backward country into the powerhouse of the planet, the envy of humanity. Literally millions of Americans, both immigrants and native born, started businesses in small shops, or even by pushing a cart, and built them into thriving and productive concerns. Some went broke, suffering reverses often caused by elements beyond their control, but many picked themselves up, tried again, and achieved enormous success. A man had only to consider whether his new venture would find favor in the marketplace. If he could accrue sufficient capital, had managerial ability, and could attract customers, his chances of success were very good indeed.

Today, the situation is far more complicated. In addition to all the former requirements, an American wishing to own his own business must now operate according to the whims and vagaries of government policy. For example, land and property development has become a spectacularly risky venture because of land-use laws and other ecology-related extensions of government power. In addition to having to maneuver through an obstacle course of federal, state, and local bureaucrats, with their maze of ambiguous and often contradictory rules and regulations, a would-be developer is in danger of having his money and/or his property tied up for years in court by assorted "public interest" Friends of the Mosquito or Society for the Preservation of Swamps.

Whatever their field, entrepreneurs seeking their share of the American Dream are required to file reams of paperwork just to obtain the licenses, permits, and approvals now necessary before one can start a new business. Many state taxing agencies want a large percentage of the first year's projected sales taxes in advance. The small entrepreneur may have to cool his heels for months waiting for some required action or decision from a county planning agency or city council with the capricious power



Big Government is making war on home ownership. The average home sold in 1963 for \$19,300; in 1977 it cost \$51,800. Payments on that 1963 house, excluding taxes, came to \$92.64 per month; on the 1977 house, \$373 a month. In 25 years, thanks to inflation and regulation, the same home could cost \$171,600.

to blight his future at the merest whim.

Obtaining the venture capital to start a business has also been made more difficult by Big Government. It is increasingly harder to start a new enterprise out of personal savings because the graduated income tax discourages personal accumulation of capital. Inflation, resulting from government covering its debts by printing money, constantly pushes taxpayers into ever higher tax brackets. The more you make, the more the government takes, both absolutely and as a percentage.

The so-called Tax Reform Act of 1976 closed many of the so-called "loopholes" which made private risk capital available for new ventures. The money that formerly went to creative and ambitious people to form new businesses or expand established enterprises is now transferred to the government which for the most part spends it on unproductive people and wasteful projects. Instead of broadening the tax base by encouraging creation of new businesses which will hire unemployed people and increase the amount of goods and services available to the public, the government is doing just the opposite. People working in the private sector are *independent*, you see, while those working for the government or living

off it via Welfare checks are *dependent*. Collectivists and their elitist allies in the Planning Class are well aware that independent people are harder to control.

The small businessman, traditional backbone of the nation's economy, is thus becoming an endangered species. According to the Senate Small Business Committee, a new firm these days stands only about a twenty-five percent chance of surviving. The figures from the U.S. courts on business bankruptcies are sobering. In 1975, the total hit 30,130 — a forty-five percent increase over the previous year.

Many of these businesses have simply been taxed and regulated into oblivion. At last count there were ninety-eight hundred different types of approved government forms. Individuals and business firms spend over a quarter of a billion man hours a year just filling out papers for the bureaucracy. Congressman Philip Crane (R.-Illinois) informs us that government regulation now costs the economy as much as \$150 billion a year. What this has done to the American Dream in lost jobs, lower productivity, and destroyed businesses is incalculable.

We are literally being drowned in laws. In less than one month the current Congress succeeded in introduc-

ing 3,298 prospective new laws in the House and 624 in the Senate. This prodigious task was accomplished in only fifty-four hours and twenty minutes in the Senate and eighteen hours and fifty-nine minutes in the House. The time covered was January 4 through January 31, 1977.

But that is just the tip of the iceberg. Most "laws" under which businesses and the rest of us are governed are not laws at all as defined by the Constitution, which says that only Congress shall make the laws. The vast majority of these are simply rulings, directives, and memos cooked up by bureaucrats. Unfortunately, and contrary to the Constitution, they have the force of law.

From 1955 until 1970, the size of the *Federal Register*, which contains all new regulations, expanded by five percent a year. Since 1970, the volume has increased by twenty-five percent annually. Last year, those new regulations and interpretations required 67,027 pages of fine print just to list. That is more than double the number of pages in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*! And you are responsible for obeying every one of the hundreds of thousands of these regulations. Ignorance of the law, the bureaucrats tell us, is no excuse. That can be the last cliché you hear before they slam the cell door.

Big Brother's little enforcers from such agencies as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency are likely to drop by at any time. Many family breadwinners have seen their realized dream of a good job turned into a nightmare as a result of such federal harassment. According to Congressman John Myers (R.-Indiana):

"Since June 1971, over 15,710 workers, including more than 600 in Indiana, have lost their jobs at plants

that were forced to close when they were unable to comply with either state or federal Environmental Protection Agency pollution-control standards. Another 30,863 workers may soon join American welfare lines if their plants also fail to adhere to E.P.A. pollution guidelines in the near future.

"Jobs which once employed thousands of productive workers receiving a steady and certain income but are now destroyed represent but one ingredient in the foul regulatory brew concocted by the E.P.A. The E.P.A.'s and O.S.H.A.'s . . . regulatory madness has bubbled over their intended perimeters and they are drowning our economy with a multitude of ridiculous decrees.

"The E.P.A. has compiled a list of 75 companies that pollution agencies acknowledge they have felled. The E.P.A.'s hatchet job is so effective and extensive that it does not record the number of employees axed at plants that provided wages to less than 25 workers — EPA says to do so would clutter their bookkeeping . . ."

One of the most frightening things about these bureaus attacking the American Dream is that they act as accuser, judge, and jury. On March 23, 1977, the Reuter Commodity Report wire carried the following story:

"The Supreme Court ruled there is no conflict with the 7th Amendment in permitting the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (O.S.H.A.) to impose fines on employers for safety violations. The Justices ruled, 8-0, that the right to trial by jury is not an absolute. 'The point is that the 7th Amendment was never intended to establish the jury as the exclusive mechanism for fact-finding in civil cases,' Justice Byron White said. Congress may, in creating

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new public rights and remedies by statute, commit their enforcement 'to a tribunal other than a court of law — such as an administrative agency,' Justice White said. The court's ruling today, which will have an impact far beyond the circumstances of this case, places the right to a jury trial in a new light. The court has now held that the 7th Amendment spoke to 'the existing legal order as it found it, and there is little or no basis for concluding that the Amendment should now be interpreted to provide an impenetrable barrier to administrative factfinding under otherwise valid Federal regulatory statutes.' "

News of this arbitrary destruction of the Seventh Amendment has been all but buried by mass media which scream blue blazes if someone so much as looks cross at the guarantees of the First or Fourteenth Amendments. As the Reuters dispatch said, *the impact goes far beyond the case in question*. It means that any administrative agency can do with you as they will and you have no constitutional recourse to trial by jury. One of our most important constitutional rights has been destroyed by the stroke of a pen.

The Seventh Amendment reads as follows: "In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law."

That Amendment has been nullified by the Supreme Court in favor of "administrative justice." Thus any bureaucrat can now haul you up, make a judgment, and impose either a fine or jail sentence. Businessmen no

longer have constitutional protection against arbitrary rulings by O.S.H.A., E.P.A., F.P.C., F.T.C., etc.

The businessman is not, of course, the only one whose independence and prospects have been undermined in this attack on the American Dream. The standard of living and financial security of every one of us is being undermined as Big Government commandeers an ever greater portion of the nation's economic pie. That part of the pie which the government eats, after all, cannot be eaten by the productive wage earner. The more government takes, the more individual achievement of the American Dream becomes impossible for ever greater numbers of people. And the situation is serious.

As Wesley Hillendahl, director of business research for the Bank of Hawaii, observes: "Following the great depression when combined government spending rose to between 20 and 23 percent of personal income, World War II briefly required a level of government spending amounting to more than 62 percent of personal income, accompanied by acute inflation of prices. By 1947, government spending returned to about 23 percent. Subsequently, over the years, government spending has gradually taken an increasing share of personal income. Spending reached 35.8 percent in 1960, and 41.8 percent in 1970. Presently, government absorbs 43.5 percent of personal incomes, twice the share of 40 years ago."

This year the Washington machine will be gobbling our dreams of personal success and achievement at the rate of a billion dollars a day, spending at the rate of more than ten thousand dollars per second. As radio commentator Paul Harvey has noted, each billion in federal spending translates to twenty-five dollars for every family.

The Squandercrats along the Potomac are now adding fifty billion dollars per year in federal spending. At the rate of twenty-five dollars per billion, your direct and hidden taxes are being escalated \$1,250 a year. Based upon federal spending of \$460 billion this year, your family's share of the tab comes to \$11,500. That sum would have purchased a lot of furniture, room additions, microwave ovens, health care, or education for your children. Instead of being left in your hands so you could realize the American Dream, however, much of it will be turned over to the professional Welfare class or to the regulators who add to the costs of everything we purchase.

But remember that \$150 billion which government regulations add to the costs of the goods we buy. If that is apportioned among families at the rate of twenty-five dollars per billion, the cost of the regulation tax comes to an additional \$3,750 per family each year. It is ironic that with taxation gobbling up almost fifty cents on each dollar spent, the "Liberal" Establishment and its army of media flacks keep chanting about the "huge profits" being made by business. Yet profits, which are vital to industrial growth and job creation, amount to only one-tenth the sum which goes to taxes. The Marxists have it all backwards. The so-called "surplus value" is not going into the coffers of the rich capitalists but into the hands of the bureaucrats, Welfare drones, and destructive regulators.

The effects of government taxation as it ripples through the economy are very complicated, but we think Irwin Schiff sums up the situation well in his book *The Biggest Con*, where he observes: "America is being poisoned by a tax system that (1) penalizes economic efficiency and de-

stroys incentive while subsidizing inefficiency and encouraging unemployment, (2) diverts the nation's supply of capital to less efficient areas, (3) destroys jobs, (4) increases substantially the difficulty of the older workers to find employment, (5) promotes greater concentrations of economic power, (6) compels those entering business to make Uncle Sam a 'silent partner' who puts up no capital yet demands more than half the profits, and (7) contributes directly to a lowering of public morality while increasing the influence of organized crime"

Naturally the agents of Big Brother do everything they can to hide the total impact of their spending policies from those families whose share of the American Dream is being destroyed. But the *authority* of the tax bureaucracy is never played down, and every effort is made to drape it with a mantle of fear. Three little letters which make the typical American's blood run cold are I.R.S.

The boys from the Internal Revenue Service make a joke of the American Dream of justice and fair play as they mock the basic concept that a citizen is presumed innocent until proven guilty. With the tax authorities, as with the regulators, you are guilty unless you can prove yourself innocent. One of the principal purposes of the Internal Revenue Code and its enforcers seems to be to destroy those persons who by their energy and efforts threaten to become economically successful in an independent business.

A recent article in the *Las Vegas Sun* reported extensively on I.R.S. methods. According to this report: "If you're one of the two million American taxpayers picked for audit every year by the Internal Revenue Service, you're in for an Excedrin-sized headache. The auditor sitting across from

you with the Mona Lisa smile is grinning because he knows something you don't know — he's been told how hard to squeeze. And armed with a 33-foot-long set of secret manuals, he knows how to extract blood from even the driest turnip."

How much will you end up paying? Amazingly, the *Sun* reports, "it depends on your auditor's quotas — what the IRS calls 'target goals' — that gives him the idea of how hard he's going to squeeze you." The report continues: "In 1972, for example, office auditors were expected to assess an additional \$70 in taxes to people earning less than \$10,000; field auditors working over people with incomes between \$10,000 and \$30,000 were expected to produce another \$926. Those figures are only an approximation; they come from an outdated 'Long Range Plan.' The IRS refuses to release more current figures."

The war on the American Dream assaults everyone. But perhaps its most vicious weapon hits hardest at those on fixed incomes (such as the aged) and the poor. It is inflation — and it too is made in Washington. The mass media use the terms *inflation* and *increasing cost of living* interchangeably. Your dictionary, however, will tell you that inflation is an increase in the money supply. The new money takes on value only by detracting from the value of all the money previously in circulation. It percolates through the economy bidding up wages and prices.

Where does the new money come from? Much of it is spun out through the Federal Reserve System, which controls credit available to the bankers. When the government spends more money than it takes in through taxation, it must make up the balance through an involved process, the ultimate result of which is that the debt is covered by printing new money. If the

Congress spends fifty billion dollars more than it taxes, soon fifty billion dollars in new money will be pumped into the economy. This flood of greenbacks is drowning the American Dream.

When Richard Nixon entered the White House in 1969, the federal Debt was \$386 billion. After eight years of big talk about the necessity for pinching every penny until Abraham Lincoln screamed for mercy in a falsetto voice, the National Debt was mushroomed to \$625 billion. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, "when the next fiscal year closes on September 30, 1977, the public debt will stand at about \$699 billion. . . ." The editors of *U.S. News* project that the formal Debt will hit one trillion dollars by 1982.

What does all this have to do with the American Dream? Plenty. The federal deficits of yesterday have become the increased cost of living we are experiencing today. Inflation is ripping apart the American way of life. It affects everyone from young people who cannot as a result afford college to retirees whose pensions have been so devastated that they are forced to survive on pet food.

Another part of the American Dream which is under attack by government is ownership of a home. The privately owned home is rapidly becoming a thing of the past, and in the not too distant future it could be as unique to the wealthy as a Rolls Royce. Already the price of maintaining a home is ballooning like the Good-year Blimp. According to a *U.S. News* summary: "Here are some of the increases the home-owner has had to contend with in that five-year period: Taxes up 63 per cent; heating oil, up 131 per cent; natural gas, up 87 per cent; electricity, up 57 per cent; furnace repairs, up 44 per cent; the bill for repainting a living room, up 51 per

cent; reshingling a roof, up 58 per cent."

But, these jumps in the cost of maintaining a house pale by comparison to the explosion in the cost of buying one. The *Los Angeles Times* for October 26, 1975, reported: "The American Dream house — the house on a lot bordered by a white picket fence — has become a mirage, most realistic financiers would say. They can argue that when the nation has reached a point where the so-called average-priced dwelling is out of reach of the average potential buyer, there is a dilemma."

As a spokesman for the National Association of Realtors puts it: "Inflation has eroded our standard of living. What was an achievable dream a few years ago is no longer possible." The statistics on home prices in the United States over the last fourteen years illustrate the point. The average sale price of new homes sold in 1963 was \$19,300. In February 1977, the average price was \$51,800. That is a 7.3 percent annual increase, compounded. Put another way, a person who decided not to buy an average home in 1963 in order to buy one now would have to have earned 7.3 percent (compounded annually) on his after-tax investments in order to break even. Not many investments produce that kind of return.

But the \$32,500 difference in sale price is just the beginning of the problem. In order to come up with a twenty percent down payment in 1963, a family only had to save \$3,860. Today it takes \$10,360 to make the down payment on the average home. And there is another factor. The typical loan in 1963 was made at six percent interest. Today the loan will probably be made at nine percent. That is not just a three percent increase, it is a fifty percent difference. Over the life of a thirty-year loan this difference

amounts to a staggering \$100,915. The total cost of thirty years of payments on the 1963 house would be \$33,350. The total tab on today's new house payments is \$134,265! This represents what is known as "the magic of compound interest." The monthly payments on the 1963 house were \$92.64 per month. Now the monthly payment amounts to \$373 every four weeks.

On April Fool's Day the Associated Press reported on a study presented to the Senate Banking Committee by economist Kenneth Rosen of Princeton University, concluding that America is in "a housing crisis of unprecedented proportions" that will get worse during the next decade. Because of high monthly payments on mortgages and increasing down-payment requirements, Rosen found, "nearly two-thirds of all American families could not afford to purchase the home where they now live." The professor also revealed: "By 1986 the median-priced new home will sell for close to \$90,000 with the average down payment required averaging close to \$23,000."

Manplan Consultants in Chicago have plugged in their calculators and discovered that if the price of homes increases at only six percent (about half the current rate), by the turn of the century the average house will cost \$171,600. That's dollars, friends, not lira, kopeks, or pesos.

This mushrooming cost of housing is already having disastrous consequences for young adults seeking their share of the American Dream. As United Press reports: "No matter how hard they plot, save, scrimp and scheme, most young American couples are learning they may never be able to afford to raise their children in the same comfortable little home in the suburbs where they grew up. What they see are soaring mortgage interest rates — now as high as 12

per cent in southern California — inflated prices and no-growth policies in stable, attractive neighborhoods that force them to look farther away for a home of their own."

An established couple who have owned a home for several years can sell it at an inflated price and buy another at a similarly inflated figure. Except for the fact that their new loan will carry a higher interest rate, they have simply traded in similarly inflated values. But the younger married couple doesn't have any equity in an existing home which they can use to parlay the purchase of a new one. Where are they going to get the huge amounts of cash necessary for a down payment?

And what about our so-called senior citizens? They have another problem, equally disturbing. Let us say that you bought a home thirty-five years ago while you were in your early thirties. Assume that it was in a good location and cost ten thousand dollars. Today, you are ready to retire on your pension and Social Security and the house is now worth seventy-five thousand dollars. This increase in market value is academic unless you sell, but your property taxes have gone through the roof. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, property taxes have been increasing at the rate of ten percent a year. A worker might be able to keep up with such escalating taxes on his home while he is employed, but what happens after he retires? It is not unusual for property taxes to run as much as two thousand dollars a year on a nice, but unpretentious, home. Many retired persons are thus forced to sell their homes, part of the American Dream that they had taken for granted, because they cannot afford the property taxes.

Big Brother is not in the least disturbed, of course, for he would like as

many of us as possible to live in nice, "efficient," high-rise apartments in the big cities. The so-called energy and pollution crises are already being used as a rationalization. A recent report of the Urban Land Institute speaks of moving as many Americans as possible from their suburban homes with a plot of land into clustered apartment houses in the decaying cities. Russell Peterson, chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, writes as follows of Big Brother's plans: "We have long taken for granted that single-family houses were the cheapest and most efficient way for fiscally responsible suburban communities to grow. Both of these assumptions have been pretty much discarded."

Discarded, of course, by the radical people planners who are making war on the American Dream.

A report released recently by Big Brother's Environmental Protection Agency, *The Costs Of Sprawl*, concludes that the single-family house is the most costly to build and the most wasteful type of housing to maintain. Furthermore, the report continues, the single-family house pollutes the atmosphere and drains communities of services much more readily than do apartment houses. So, you see, while Super Fed is doing everything possible to keep us from owning a home, he is going to help us rent an apartment. According to *Moneysworth* for April 12, 1976:

Thousands of American homeowners and tenants have become eligible for federal rent aid under a newly-passed law raising the income levels permitted families that are receiving housing subsidies.

The income limit has been upped to \$13,500 for a family of five and \$15,900 for a family of eight. And the income range is actually higher than

that, because those figures represent "adjusted gross income" — income after real estate taxes and a deduction of \$300 for each minor dependent.

Before the law was passed, a family of five could not earn over \$9,450 to qualify for housing subsidies. A family of eight had to earn less than \$11,475.

Beneficiaries of the subsidies need not repay, even if their incomes rise later.

Last year, according to the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, public housing subsidies totalled over \$1.7 billion, and larger appropriations may be required this year.

Under the HUD-subsidy program, an eligible family pays a maximum of 25% of its income, with HUD or the landlord making up the difference between the 25% and the "fair market" rent for the apartment.

HUD does set rent ceilings on apartments. Families dwelling in existing elevator buildings can pay no more than \$315 a month. Those moving into new buildings can pay no more than \$582.

Four hundred thousand American families are already on the dole for rent subsidies, and up to twenty-seven million families could qualify. Secretary Carla Hills announced that H.U.D. would provide rent subsidies for any family whose income is less than eighty percent of the median income of other families in the area. Apparently the government's latest poverty standard is your next-door neighbor. If you live in Washington, D.C., and make under \$14,840, you qualify for federal rent subsidies — carefully aimed at placing as many Americans as possible in urban apartments instead of their own homes.

And not only is the American

Dream of owning your own business and home under attack, but so is the traditional desire to own and drive your own automobile. Columnist Patrick Buchanan observes:

"Of all the inventions that have liberated the working man from the drudgery of daily existence, none has done more than the automobile. It has taken him off crowded and dirty commuter buses, subways and streetcars, where he sometimes spent 90 minutes a day Yet, for 10 years, a political war has been mounted against the automobile. Private cars are regularly disparaged by the trendies in the media as inefficient wasters of raw materials. They are blamed for urban sprawl, congestion, pollution and the energy crisis. Pressured by Ralph Nader and like-minded 'friends of the consumer,' the Congress has mandated costly styling changes, safety features and emission standards. And the consumer has paid the price. Half of the models have gone off the market, the price of an average car has risen by hundreds of dollars, and Detroit has been pushed deeper into the recession

"The motives of the anti-auto crowd are varied. There is first the snobbish disparagement by the elite for the mode of transportation favored by the masses Secondly, as a statist, the modern liberal looks to government as the instrument of national deliverance. Ideologically, he is vastly more comfortable with a government-managed, government-run transit system than with a system of hundreds of thousands of individuals in hundreds of thousands of privately owned cars. Then, there are the economic stakes involved. The big-city media, the giant banks, the urban politicians have a vested interest in stopping the national stampede to the suburbs. And since it is the auto

which makes out-migration possible, the auto is the declared enemy.

"But the American middle and working classes have stakes here as well. In a free choice, they have voted decisively against mass transit, and in favor of the automobile. Today, 80 percent of the labor force rides to work by car and 94 percent of the inter-city trips are by auto."

The collectivists mean to stop this. They are making war on the American Dream — the idea of having your own business, your own home, and your own car. On March 16, 1977, Transportation Secretary Brock Adams proclaimed that Americans must begin preparing for the day when "the gas runs out" and they no longer can freely drive their automobiles. Adams announced that a major goal of the Administration's energy program would be to educate citizens to the fact that their transportation habits will have to be changed; that someday they will be "unable any longer to use their automobile as they do now."

According to economist Milton Friedman, the Nobel laureate, the Carter-Schlesinger energy program is aimed at nationalizing the production and distribution of energy. The provisions, says Friedman, "introduce the hands of the bureaucrats into every stage of pricing, production and consumption." Here the American Dream of abundance is under attack. The only reason we face an energy crisis, Friedman says, is "because the government stuck its clumsy hands in the problem. We economists don't know much, but we do know how to create a shortage. If you want to create a shortage of tomatoes, for example, just pass a law that retailers can't sell tomatoes for more than two cents per pound. Instantly you'll have a tomato shortage. It's the same with oil or gas."

The whole theme being promoted

in this field is that we will never have it so good again, and that the era of abundance is over. The lights are being turned out on the American Dream. On purpose. How far it could go was recently suggested on the Tom Snyder Show when Dr. Barry Commoner quoted President Carter as having told a panel of energy experts: "We're going to have to give up some of our luxuries. One of those luxuries is criticism of government efforts in this field." We have apparently elected a Goober Göring.

Still, comedians are saying that the Carter energy program may bring families closer together . . . since nobody in the family will be able to go anywhere. The fact is that the values of the traditional family, so basic to the American Dream, are also under attack. Collectivism brings with it social disintegration; some caused by economic problems and others by the effects on morality when people are told that they are not responsible for the consequences of their actions. Consider:

One-third of all marriages now end in divorce. The figure would be higher but 660,000 couples live together without bothering with the bands of matrimony. One-sixth of America's school-age youngsters now live with but one parent. In 1950, four percent of all births were illegitimate; now, despite the pill and readily available abortion, the rate of bastardy is at 14.3 percent. In Washington, D.C., more babies are born illegitimately than legitimately. Not all, of course, are fathered by politicians.

Runaway fathers are a major problem facing Welfare departments. It currently costs the taxpayers eight billion dollars a year to support families whose fathers have skipped. The presence of some 2.8 million fathers is currently listed as unknown. This being the era of Women's Lib, wives

are also running away at a record pace. According to *U.S. News* of February 23, 1976:

In ever-growing numbers, unhappy wives across the U.S. are on the run — from husbands, children and household responsibilities. Once comparatively rare, such women are beginning to outnumber fugitive husbands on missing-persons lists in some metropolitan areas. A New York-based firm of investigators of missing persons, Tracers Company of America, Inc., reports that runaway wives now outnumber departed husbands on its list by nearly 2 to 1, compared with 300 husbands to 1 wife in its 1960 files.

Under mounting economic pressure from ever bigger government, even parents who are living together do not see as much of their spouses and children. Within a few years the family with two wage earners will be the rule, not the exception. Since 1960, the number of families where two must work to earn a living for the household, excluding children who work, has zoomed from twenty-nine percent of all husband-wife households to more than forty-seven percent.

Naturally, some of this increase can be attributed to the ethos of Women's Lib. But much of it is due to government-sponsored inflation. Many families find it an absolute necessity for the wife to work in order to keep the bill-collecting wolf away from the door. As one national commentator has remarked: "The concept of a family where the husband is the only breadwinner, the wife is a homemaker out of the labor force, and there are children, may be a useful one for many illustrative purposes, but it does not represent the typical U.S. family of the mid-

1970s." Among husband-wife families in 1975, only seven of every hundred fit this description. So much for the American Dream.

The nearly omnipotent government which has raised this specter is meanwhile working to make the situation worse. Two Child Development Acts which would have established state nurseries and a whole host of programs designed to wrench the child away from the family have been defeated in recent years — one by veto and the other by Congress. You can be sure, however, that those pressing this attack on the American family will be back. Nothing is too outrageous for them. One cannot, for example, imagine a more brazen attack on the American Dream than the licensing of children, a proposal now being considered by the Senate-House Joint Economic Committee. The respected columnist Paul Scott reports:

"New life is being pumped into that highly controversial and way-out plan to restrict the nation's population growth by requiring birth licenses for future children. The Nazi-like population control measure has surfaced in Congress after being placed on the back burner for several years by its advocates because of the adverse public reaction that resulted when it was first put forward in 1964.

"Under normal circumstances, the plan would not be taken seriously and could be brushed off as a radical population-control scheme that is going nowhere. However, this time the 13-year-old proposal of the Pill 'Em Or Kill 'Em movement has been included in an official study prepared for and being circulated by the Senate-House Joint Economic Committee. Titled 'The Transition to a Steady-State Economy,' the study was written by Professor Herman E.

Daly, professor of economics at Louisiana State University, and is an integral part of a new campaign to wrap a congressional cloak of respectability around the shocking proposal

"An outspoken advocate of 'no-growth' economic and 'negative population growth' policies, Professor Daly uses his study to propose the adoption of what he calls a 'transferable replacement fertility.' Thus, each woman would receive 2.2 licenses."

In discussing how the mandatory program would be enforced, Professor Daly explains: "One possibility is to put up the (unlicensed) children for adoption and encourage adoption by paying the adopting parents the market value, plus subsidy if need be, for their license, thus retiring a license from circulation to compensate for the child born without a license. Like any other law breakers the offending parents are subject to punishment. The punishment need not be drastic — for example, a year's labor in a public child-care center remunerated at the minimum income"

There are few things more dangerous than a "Liberal" with a plan. Taxation, energy, population, conservation, housing — you name it and the Planner has a dictatorial scheme by which our traditional aspirations can be turned into a collectivist nightmare.

Another feature of the American Dream has always been our desire to provide a sound education for our children. And even the quality of education in our country has been demonstrably reduced. Sam A. McCandless, director of the College Entrance Examination Board, says "college board" scores of high-school seniors are raising new questions about standards in the government schools.

Pointing to declining scores, McCandless says: "Not only is the decline real, but it's actually larger than it appears. This means the ability of high-school graduates to reason verbally and mathematically is steadily declining."

Scores released September 7, 1975, showed an average decline over the previous years of ten points in verbal ability and eight points in math skills among the one million college-bound members of last spring's graduating class. Scores for girls, currently victims of the Women's Lib fads, are falling faster than those for boys. Which may be why some educators are arguing that traditional skills measured by the college boards aren't as important as the "creative" abilities stressed by many schools in recent years. "If the skills demanded by these tests are what it takes to get through college, then maybe it's the colleges that ought to change," says David Darland, an official of the collectivist National Education Association.

Not only are many students learning nothing, but terrorism has become a constant problem. Violence and vandalism in the public schools are approaching pandemic proportions as the Left continues to promote disrespect for authority and property. Investigating the scope of school crime, a Senate Subcommittee has found that between 1970 and 1973 school-related homicides increased by eighteen percent; rapes and attempted rapes increased by forty percent; robberies went up thirty-seven percent; assaults on students soared by eight-five percent; assaults on teachers jumped seventy-seven percent; and, drug and alcohol offenses on school property increased by thirty-eight percent. Later reports, not yet converted to national averages, show school crime has continued

to grow. More than two hundred thousand cases of aggravated assault at schools are reported each year, and some seventy thousand teachers are injured severely enough to require medical aid.

Meanwhile the poor scholastic achievements in high school are flopping over into college. In 1975 an incredible forty-five percent of the freshmen entering the University of California had to be given remedial courses in English before they could continue their university education. The "Liberal" bias against competition and grades is threatening to make a college degree no more proof of academic achievement than the now almost automatic high-school diploma. Jack McCurdy, education editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, writes: "Grades are threatening to become almost meaningless as instructors drop traditional standards of academic quality and, instead, disperse A and B marks off-handedly to a growing number of students. Consequently, students now are not only able to get through school and college more easily and with less preparation but with higher grades than ever before."

A first-rate college education, long the dream of most every American parent for his child, is now almost prohibitively expensive. Costs run as much as seven thousand dollars per year at the better private schools. Multiply that times four (or times six, or more, if graduate school is in prospect) and then multiply the result by the number of children you have. If tuition rates continue to rise by only six percent per annum, by the year 2001 tuition alone (not counting room and board) will be more than sixteen thousand dollars per year. So much for our dreams of a college education for our children.

We have seen that the collectivist

attack on the American Dream includes assaults on owning your own business, home, and automobile; the integrity of your savings and income; the quality and amount of education your children will receive; and, the traditional values of the family itself. Even basic decency is under attack.

Consider the pornography problem. One remembers the hullabaloo in 1952 over a movie called *The Moon Is Blue*. The outcry resulted because the male lead said to his female counterpart that he would probably try to "seduce" her. Today, almost every film released has dialogue infinitely more offensive. Every imaginable sex act is performed on the screen in living color, and there is hardly a magazine stall in the country that does not sell pornography in one form or another. A healthy society would find suitable economic punishments, but the cynicism about the American Dream and our country's ancient values has all but destroyed popular indignation.

Two decades ago, who would have believed that the modish cause of 1977 would be faggot freedom? As William Hoar, writing in the April 2, 1975, issue of *The Review Of The News*, observes: "The militants of the Gay Liberation Movement are not content to practice their psychopathological deviance in private. Their idea is to flaunt their perversions and have them accepted and approved as on a par with love between a man and a woman. Incredibly, more and more, our once morally straight society, unable to differentiate between right and wrong, has been willing not only to tolerate the Lavendar Mob but to subsidize it with federal and state tax money. For instance, in the last two years the Gay People's Union at Stanford University has received a \$3,719 grant

from the U.S. Office of Education and a \$30,000 subsidy from the California Department of Health. Not long ago, a federal grant of \$120,000 was given to the perverts of the Seattle-based Stonewall organization."

Two years ago, the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its list of illnesses. This action came under pressure from "Gay Liberation" groups which maintained the psychiatrists had seen only the sick and disturbed among them, not the happy, well-adjusted homosexuals who did not seek treatment. Now homosexuals are engaged in political battles. In California, under homosexual pressure, the state legislature has decriminalized homosexual acts between adults. Homosexuals have become a political power bloc in California. A *Washington Post* reporter noted: "In all parts of California, politicians regularly visit gay bars and drag shows seeking votes. The developments here are part of a nationwide trend." Now an advocate of hiring homosexuals for our fire and police departments has been named by Jimmy Carter to head the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. We will soon be hearing demands for Affirmative Action hiring of perverts.

Nothing is too outrageous. In his war on our traditional values and dreams, Big Brother is trying for a *Gotcha* on every front. Soon government will control what you earn, what you may buy, where you will live, where and how you may travel, how you educate your children, and almost every other aspect (large or

small) of your life. Virtually every move that the politicians and bureaucrats make diminishes your control over your own life and increases theirs. They want to make you dependent upon Washington from the cradle to the grave. Every added power we give government is a reduced freedom for the citizen.

Some would argue until we are manacled about whether all of this is happening because of the mysterious tide of history or whether (as I believe) we are being made the victims of a carefully conceived plan. The point for now is that the American Dream is being destroyed. That is simply undeniable. One possible response is to do what the people in the movie *Network* did when they went to their balconies and shouted: "I'm damn mad and I won't stand for it any more." But we need to do much more than shout.

The function of this magazine is to inform you about contemporary affairs. Whether any of us survive as free men and women, whether we hold on to the American Dream or permit its destruction, will depend upon how we *act* in response to what we know to be happening. In my view the best means of taking concerted action to save ourselves and our country is offered by The John Birch Society (395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, Massachusetts 02178). I am myself an active member, and I hope you will look into its action program and join its campaign for more individual responsibility and less government control. Without the slightest exaggeration, everything we love is at stake. ■ ■

CRACKER BARREL

■ The nomination of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 cost his friends less than seven hundred dollars, says *Farm Journal*. Judge David Davis, one of Lincoln's intimates, told Senator John J. Ingalls of Kansas that this covered everything "including headquarters, telegraphing, music, fare of delegates, incidentals." That, of course, was some time ago.