

Providence

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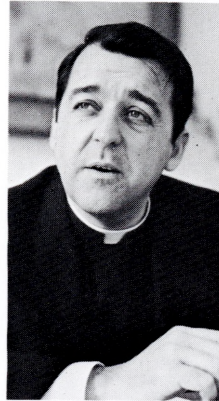
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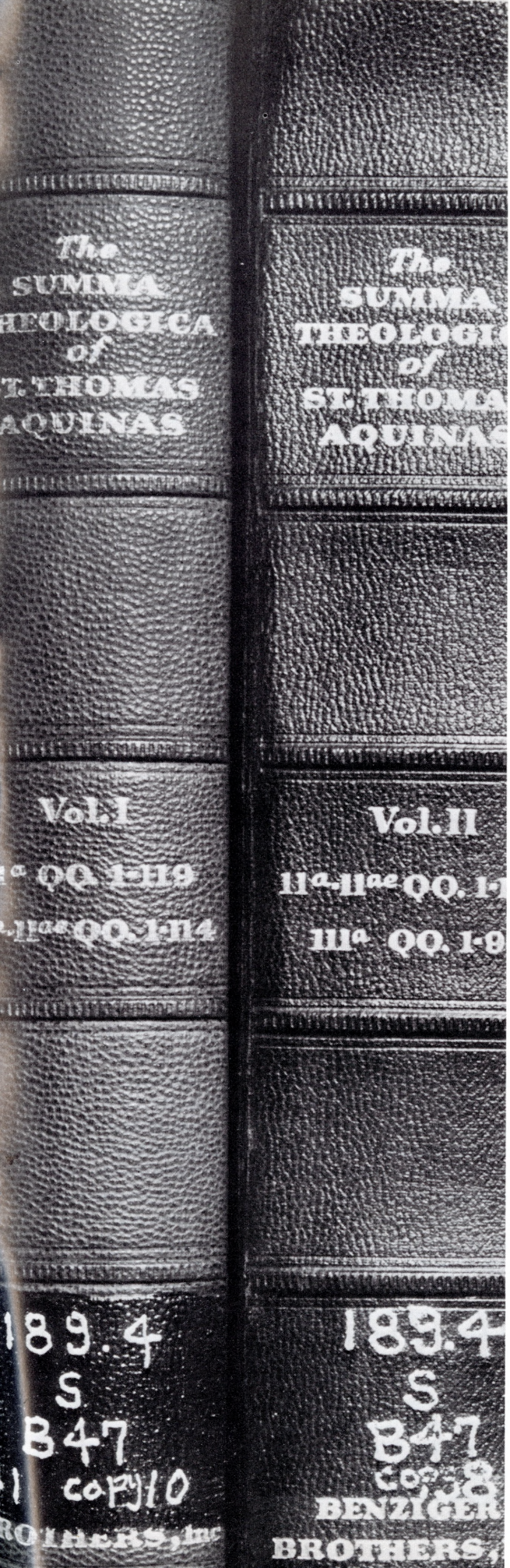
Spring is the time when a young man's fancy turns to all sorts of things, least of all work. The administration, either because of its "youth" or because of the heavy schedule of the past few months, shows signs of wanting to dream away the hours in the warm and welcome Spring sun. However, what keeps us firmly anchored in reality is the pressing need for long-rang planning of buildings, faculty development and student life, to say nothing of day to day problems. Thanks to the consideration and common sense of faculty and students we have been reasonably free to work on the graver matters facing the College.

Among other things the unresolved state of the Chapin Hospital property requires that while we plan its possible purchase, we must wait patiently for the community to determine in its own good judgment how the health needs of the State can be best handled.

Oh! for the good old days when one could avoid such delicate problems by picking up and heading for the distractions of Spring.

William Paul Haas, O.P.
President

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THOMISM

AND ITS

RELEVANCE

by John F. Cunningham, O.P.

At an academic convocation held at the college on March 7 in honor of St. Thomas Aquinas, Father Cunningham delivered an address on Thomism and Its Relevance. In the first part of his talk, Father Cunningham pointed out Aquinas' attitude toward novelty, his respect for natural reason and his position on authority and the critical spirit. The speaker then addressed himself to the question: "Why has Thomism become largely irrelevant?" His remarks follow.

THAT A CERTAIN DEGREE of prejudice against anything medieval is innate in much of 20th century thought I will not — indeed I cannot — deny. There are contemporary thinkers for whom medieval is a dirty word. But this is not the whole story and it is not at any rate the point on which I want to focus. It seems to me that one of the major challenges to Thomism comes from within, that one of the reasons why Thomism is irrelevant is because some pseudo-Thomists made it so. What I am saying, quite simply,



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is this: It is my firm conviction that the beclouding of the true image of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Common Doctor of Christendom, is due in an alarmingly large measure to the reactionary, obscurantist, and ultra-literal interpretation put on Thomism by those who claim for themselves the title of Thomist. Allow me to explain what I mean.

It is a simple and indisputable historical fact that the text books, in philosophy and theology, of the early part of the Thomist revival — indeed most of the manuals with which I am familiar — have a rather unusual source. They are based much more directly on scholastic treatises of the 17th and 18th centuries than on an independent appreciation of the vigorous and independent thinking of the 13th century. There are altogether too many contemporary Thomists — the word should really be placed within inverted commas — whose basic inspiration seems to derive from the same source. Their brand of Thomism is a closed system that is unreceptive to the stimulating influence of new ideas. Their spirit is reflected in the attitude which states: “If

Thomas or one of his major commentators didn’t say it, then it simply is not worth saying. The words they speak are often the words of Thomas; the voice is one that Thomas himself would never understand.”

Such a mentality is thoroughly satisfied and rests complacent when a definition can be formed. For example, one of the most vigorously debated questions among contemporary thinkers is the meaning and the dimensions of natural law. There is, to be sure, some deep confusion on this question among many American legal and political thinkers. Now when the Thomist triumphantly thunders, “Natural law is nothing else than the participation of the eternal law in the rational creature”, he solves exactly nothing. Our contemporaries simply do not know what we are talking about, because we are talking in a climate of opinion that is totally unfamiliar to them, the medieval. I do not say that this is not a healthy climate; but we simply cannot expect others to enter it without preparation.

Our contemporaries cannot, they say, assent to the teachings of St. Thomas nor can they refute these teach-

“...Anyone can set up straw men only to tear them down and I wonder how familiar some of our so-called Thomists are with primary sources of other thinkers...”



St. Thomas Aquinas

ings. Thomism seems to them neither true nor false, but simply irrelevant. This logically brings me to my second indictment — the word is perhaps too strong — against the self-styled Thomists of whom I speak. I refer to their attitude towards all those who are not Thomists.

I can remember discussing some of the problems facing the 20th century Thomist with a man who claimed to be a Thomist. I asked him what he thought our approach to the thought of Jean-Paul Sartre should be. “Sartre,” he said, “that atheist who writes dirty plays.” I realized that intelligent discussion of the point was beyond all hope and changed the subject. Yet I am quite convinced that this man would have been highly indignant if I had suggested that he was not being authentically Thomistic. Aquinas himself, however, always gave his opponents a fair hearing. He would dissect their arguments in order to understand them more accurately; whenever possible, he made certain that he read their works. It is shocking to discover would-be Thomists who condemn all non-Thomists out of hand on the basis of the scantiest knowledge of their genuine teachings.

I might document what I am saying from any number of textbooks on scholastic or Thomistic philosophy. How often do we clerics remember reading such sentences as “The Kantian teaching is ridiculous,” “Hegel proposes an absurd teaching,” and the like. As Gilson says: “Only the scholastic philosophers writing in Latin still think that insult is a step in argument. They themselves are not really angry and they do not mean any mischief. These insults are to them mere literary comments, the mere suggestion of a dance step at the torture pole. The poor man is wrong, hence he is out of his wits.” (*The Philosopher and Theology*, p. 49) Perhaps too much of this spirit has rubbed off on contemporary Thomists.

I suggest that such authors — and their number is legion — are not being intellectually honest. Anyone can set up straw men only to tear them down and I sometimes wonder how familiar some of our so-called Thomists are with primary sources of other thinkers. Some of them seem no more familiar with such sources than, say, Will Durant does with Aquinas. Such a purely polemical attitude toward other philosophers exposes the

“... The inflexible commitment of the pseudo-Thomist to set formulae and rigidly cast definitions is most assuredly not in the spirit of St. Thomas...”

man who adopts it to a grave danger. It is distinctly possible that he will become more concerned with defending his own system at all costs than with defending truth. His mind will become fixed to certain fixed grooves of thought and lose its sensitivity. And, inevitably, there follow two of the greatest obstacles to genuine philosophical and theological progress: intellectual stagnation and a false sense of intellectual security.

When he confronts a thought system outside the scholastic tradition, the authentic Thomist will always bear in mind the words of Aquinas himself: “No one is so devoid of the truth that he has not grasped a bit of it, however minimal it might be.”

The inflexible commitment of the pseudo-Thomist to set formulae and rigidly cast definitions is most assuredly not in the spirit of St. Thomas. When, for example, we define truth as the correspondence of the mind with reality, we have given an accurate description of truth. But surely there is a great deal more to be said. Joseph Peiper points out that in the first question of his work *On Truth*, Aquinas does not end with a neatly formulated definition of truth. He offers us several distinguishing characteristics; excludes none of them; and, acknowledges none of them as completely valid. The road has opened up into whole new areas of speculation, into what Gabriel Marcel calls the mystery of being.

Nothing, I submit, is more liberal, and less authoritarian and doctrinaire than this approach. It is in the best tradition of intellectual integrity and worthy of the great mind of Aquinas. Without claiming to give an air-tight solution, he leaves the door open for future questing and discovering.

In the same vein, I should like to note with Peiper that the incompleteness of the *Summa Theologiae* is something more than a historical fact. Aquinas' silence is an external manifestation of an inner conviction he had already made eminently clear. All our knowledge, he insists, and especially our knowledge about divine things is fragmentary. “The most we can know about God,” he writes, “is that He exceeds all knowledge and language. That man knows God most perfectly who realizes that whatever can be said or thought of Him is less than what God really is.” (*Expos. super Librum de Causis*, prop. 6)

The clarity of Aquinas' diction can be quite deceptive. To be sure, we do not find his negative theology very surprising, since it represents a tradition that goes back to the writings of the Pseudo-Dionysius of the 6th century. But he goes a step further, saying that we really cannot get to the bottom of created things either. To be a creature means, after all, to be a reflection of a divine plan, a plan which is quite beyond our comprehension in this life. Indeed, existence is so incomprehensible that we cannot even say that it exists. As Thomas himself puts it: “Just as we cannot say that

running itself runs, so also we cannot say that being itself is." (*In Boethii de Hebdomadibus*, lect. 2). Again and again, we find statements in Aquinas which the Thomism of the schools has not prepared us for.

I do not mean to suggest that Thomas was veering towards a sophisticated form of agnosticism. He assuredly does not say that neither God nor things are knowable. Quite the contrary, he consistently maintains that they are so knowable that we can never end our attempts to know them. It is their very knowability that is inexhaustible. We must, I think, always be on our guard against those who come forward with claims to possess the ultimate explanation of the universe. In this sense, we must be wary and suspicious of every "ism", be it Marxism, Existentialism, or even Thomism.

Thomists must begin to incorporate new data into their thought and to investigate some of the implications of some of their positions. We should not reject a valid insight; but neither should we, or anyone who claims for himself the title of philosopher or theologian, rest on his laurels with a false sense of security and a dogmatic feeling of finality. We must admit that others besides Aquinas have contributed to the philosopher's and theologian's task. He himself would be the first to make such an admission. Once again, to quote Peiper: "His great gift to us was a synthesis so elemental and elastic that it could include all future discovery and speculation, and in so doing enrich both itself and give unity to all human knowledge." (*Guide to Thomas Aquinas*)

What I am suggesting, finally, is that Thomists stop and review the meaning of our allegiance to the thought of our Angelic Doctor. Our contemporaries have accused us of irrelevance and obscurantism; and all the time we have thought we were bringing light into the world. To be sure, we have brought some, but not nearly enough. Too often a material fidelity to the words of Aquinas masks a radical infidelity — however unconscious — to the spirit of Thomism. If we speak and think in the language and idiom of an age that is long past, then we must not be surprised if we are misinterpreted and misunderstood.

Professor Ferrater Mora of Columbia University has written in his brief but perceptive work, *Philosophy Today*: "The deeper, more earnest, and more complete a philosophy is, the easier it will be to turn it into a caricature. It is quite probable that a great deal of present-day philosophical misunderstanding arises from the fact that caricatural distortion rather than honest appraisal is the rule among philosophers." We must present the image of Thomas Aquinas to our contemporaries not "through a glass darkly", but in the brilliantly translucent mirror of truth itself. And once again, I say, Thomas would not allow the 13th century to lose Aristotle; we must not allow the 20th century to lose Thomas.

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who come forward with claims
to possess the ultimate
explanation of the universe..."*

Treading THE Elephant Walk

by Thomas M. Coskren, O.P.

THESE IS AN OLD STORY that concerns six blind Indians and an elephant. One day, while the six men were making their way along the road, the huge beast blocked their path. After a few unsuccessful attempts to get by the obstacle, the men decided to find out what the thing was that had halted their progress. Being blind, they had to rely on their sense of touch for any information they might gather, and it was not long before they began to argue among themselves regarding the nature of the obstacle.

"It seems to be a grove of trees," said the man who had felt the elephant's legs.

The man who had explored the beast's flanks objected. "No! It must be a wall. We'll have to climb over it."

The dispute continued for the good part of an hour, until one member of the group suggested that all the men pool their information. When they had done this, they came to the conclusion that they had encountered some strange animal. And using their combined knowledge of the beast as a guide, they devised a successful plan for avoiding it, so that they might continue on their way safely.

The story, of course, has an obvious application today. The relative simplicity of social problems at the time of this country's founding gave the fathers of the nation a confidence, far removed from adolescent enthusiasm, in the system of government which they had proposed for these United States. Contemporary social problems, however, are no longer simple, and it is a measure of the genius of the founding fathers that their system of government was much more than a workable legal order; it was a sound political and social philosophy. What they gave to the nation, and to the world, was a way of life. And, so far, it has been a way of life that has saved the nation from being trampled by the elephants which plague social progress.

But the fundamental assumption to this way of life has always been intelligent citizenship, which at heart recognizes that traveling the way of social progress is something like treading the elephant walk: one must depend upon shared information if the obstacles are to be avoided successfully. When new problems arise, and they seem to be most prolific of late, the intelligent man remembers the story of the blind men and the elephant; he recognizes that perhaps his view of the situation is only partial, that he may have a relative blindness in adhering to his private assessment. He therefore takes counsel with his fellows and hopes that from the store of mutual knowledge a solution to the difficulty will come forth.

Thus, he may tread the elephant walk as a conservative, but in doing so he has enough sense to recognize that every liberal opinion is not a devious expression of Communist indoctrination; he understands that Robert Frost has given the only sane norm for swinging birches.

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Or an intelligent citizen may prefer the liberal position; he does not, by that very reason, equate conservative with antediluvian. He does not suspect that every conservative cherishes a hidden banner which proclaims "Look Forward to Yesterday!" Whether he be liberal or conservative, the intelligent citizen favors his persuasion intelligently, perceiving that persuasion does not mean mental occlusion. He is wary of extremes.

Perhaps the greatest cause of this mental occlusion is the failure to understand that there are problems which are properly social, problems that involve all the citizens of the nation. Such difficulties may require moral assessment, but they do not become, for that reason, difficulties in the realm of private morality. The moral and social have never been mutually exclusive. Hence it is not enough to say that segregationists should make a searching examination of their con-

sciences; relegating the problem of segregation to private morality is as unrealistic as stating that it is merely a factional dispute between the K.K.K. and the N.A.A.C.P. Such a position would amount to self-induced blindness, a denial of that intelligence which the founding fathers assumed to be the basis of the American way of life. The solution to the problem may not be easy in all its ramifications, each side may stumble in its attempts at agreement, but every citizen should realize that segregation involves a document called the Bill of Rights, a document which demands not only public acceptance but also private commitment. An American cannot honor it with his lips and keep it far from his heart. To do so can only provoke a stampede of the elephants. And because a problem like segregation is a social as well as a moral problem, it is society as a whole which will be trampled if the proper solution is not found.

The same can be said for censorship. Too frequently this last problem is discussed in terms of private morality. Yet the fact that censorship, in one form or other, has been practiced by every responsible government since antiquity is a substantial argument for its relevance as a social problem, not a matter for discretionary action on the part of parents. Freedom of speech and the press are great freedoms, not easily won in the long history of mankind, but the hardships endured in securing them should make us more than hesitant to abuse them. The intelligent citizen, while he realizes the importance at all times of preserving these freedoms, cannot help but share the exasperation of Edmund Fuller when he writes: "But do we have to fight for the artistic integrity and creative freedom of Mickey Spillane, or for dozens of other more pretentious, but cheap and trashy, imitators of better men?"

Freedom of speech and of the press are social freedoms; they form part of the social heritage of the United States. They are, therefore, a social responsibility. For one group in society to call those who favor censorship medieval obscurantists, while extremists in this latter group shout back at their opposition perverters of youth, etc., is fatal to the nation's welfare. The intelligent citizen is not a name-caller. He always strives to find the demarcation between freedom and license, realizing that it is the common good which suffers when society fails to discover the dividing line. While there are obvious difficulties involved with this problem in a pluralist society, the solution to these difficulties cannot stem from intransigent adhesion to extreme positions. Stating that all censorship is unjust, illegal, and an infringement of basic rights is as obscurantist as marching around the corner drugstore with boycotting placards. There are principles involved in the question of censorship, and the problem will not be solved by the arbitrary destruction of these principles.

One of the principles is, of course, freedom of speech, but, at the risk of repetition, it must be stated that this is a social freedom. Whenever it is made an absolute, to the detriment of the common good, it becomes like the Spartan boy's wolf: there may be a strange sort of obdurate courage required to cherish it to one's bosom as an absolute, but in the end, it tears at the flesh of society and penetrates even to the vital regions with a ravenous destruction.

Ultimately, the problem of censorship is an elephant blocking the path to the nation's social progress. But unless all of us pool our information and our strength, unless we are prepared to exercise reasonable tolerance, unless we measure up to the intelligence which the founding fathers presupposed to the way of life they established, we are going to get nowhere. And even more frightening, our society which has been struggling towards political and social maturity runs the risk of being trampled. The story of the six blind men and the elephant is one well worth remembering.

*"... The problem of censorship
is an elephant blocking the path
to the nation's social progress..."*

WHO KILLED GOD?

by William Paul Haas, O.P.

MAYBE the Thomists did. They talked him to death, so forcing him into the tiny mold of their minds and vocabularies that there was nothing left that looked devine. Not too many people would dare to say this but the suspicion is widely held. The evidence for the crime is not conclusive enough to indite the Thomists but they live in an uneasy freedom while the investigation proceeds.

At least the Thomists can plead manslaughter rather



than murder, since if they had anything to do with the death of God it was unintentional. Others have done away with God with clear intent and sharper weapons. In the Western tradition, Protagoras — five hundred years before Christ — assumed some responsibility at least for negligence, the negligence of the agnostic. About the gods, he said: "I have no way of knowing either whether they exist or whether they do not exist nor what kind they are in form; for many are the things that hinder this knowledge, especially its obscurity and the fact that life of man is so short." But negligence is hardly murder, though it ends in the same way.

Many hundreds of years later Ludwig Feuerbach (1872) took direct aim at God and fired away with all his ammunition. If man was to save himself, he had to kill the god which prevented him from becoming himself. All the predicates which weak men had given to God: — justice, wisdom, mercy, infinity, omniscience, omnipotence and so on — are the rightful predicates of a mankind capable of infinite perfection in the unending course of history. "Poor men have rich gods", Feuerbach argued, since the more perfections they surrender to a make-believe god, the more impoverished they become. Such men are left with only the virtues of the weak, humility, meekness, repentance and piety. God had to go, but this was self-defense and not really murder.

Nietzsche was less concerned with disguising deicide. He had the courage to celebrate the reverse mystery that God is dead. This was not, in Nietzsche's mind, the redemptive sacrifice of the Son of God nor was it a lament over the fact that there never was a God. Nietzsche felt it necessary to kill the God that was in order for the superman to ascend to his proper place of sovereignty. Christ was the criminal in Nietzsche's mind for throwing away his life to preserve a degrading faith in God. Since the day of Feuerbach

and Nietzsche others have imitated their daring. Without reading the litany of the new assassin saints no one has had a more dramatic effect on contemporary thinking than Jean Paul Sartre. With God already done in, someone had to assume the responsibility for the consequences. Nietzsche was too helplessly insane (which he was) to do this. Sartre with a cultured eye looks into the dreadful consequences of the impossibility of God. With no infinite consciousness to grasp the meaning of time, man is left to make the most of it and to assume the total consequences of his own actions. The freedom of man to create himself anew in every moment is a dreadful and horrifying condition and Sartre is acute enough not to disguise it. "Man is condemned to be free." Man's freedom in this dreadful vacuum drives him to assume the role of an impossible god. Frustrated by the futility of this effort, man as



defined by Sartre, "is a useless passion." The death of God therefore is followed by no remorse and no pity for the corpse. It bears all the tragic implications of a useless killing in which nothing is accomplished, not even an aggrandizement of man.

Jean Genet, the contemporary French playwright, convicted murderer, cultist of the perverse, is canonized by Sartre as the Saint of Evil, who gives his life "to the militant achieving of Evil on Earth." Since freedom can only exist in the exploration of evil, the death of God becomes the highest act of human holiness and freedom. Thus, in this generation, there is something bizzarely consistent in the absolute perversion which follows from the distruction of God as the source of order and meaning.

It did not take long after Feuerbach for such uncompromising ideas to take their toll in theology. Theologians,

mostly Protestant, thought that the only way to save God from assassination was to hide him away in some inaccessible corner, made absolutely unapproachable by the impious words of philosophers.

Karl Barth, the reigning, if somewhat disregarded, Protestant Theologian, has lived to reflect on this vast attempt to protect God from the dangers of human thought. In his early dialectical theology he defined God as so totally other (diastasis). The only safe God could be a totally inaccessible one and the totally inaccessible one is one who is worshipped and mocked by the same silence. God so defined might just as well be dead and Barth could see the consequences of this. Hence his later return to the simple expressions of the scriptures and the creeds as the only language that would not permit and destroy the simplicity of God. Barth, however, did not apprehend and prosecute the murderer of God; he simply consoled the bereaved. But the assassins still run free and they kept shooting at anything that looked like God.

This might be said of Paul Tillich who could not tolerate any human expression affirming the existence of God. The non-existence of God was as much his ultimate concern as any affirmation of God. His elaborate system of argumentation not withstanding, there is little room for the survival of any God that would rear his timid head.

It is no vindication of Thomism to place the blame on those other culprits. Maybe they are all guilty of talking God to death.

There is always the suspicion that the existence of God is like a good joke: if you explain it, you ruin it. True, the existence of God, like a joke, requires subtlety of language and simple intuition. Yet careful analysis of the evidence for God and precise language in no way weakens the impact of the conclusion that

what theology and philosophy talk about really exists. That men have often spoken carelessly about God no more gainsays his existence than the fact that most jokes are not worth telling, prevents the good ones from being really funny.

Those who are afraid that any attempt to speak about God in human terms will surely strangle him in rhetoric fail to realize that a language which knows its own limitations does just the reverse of ensnaring God. It is precisely in this way that St. Thomas and those who followed him carefully have avoided the crime of talking God to death.

Tillich admitted that the only difference between himself and St. Thomas was that St. Thomas spoke in affirmative analogies and he chose to speak in negative analogies. There is more to it than that.

When Thomas speaks of God he does not use his words as a mold into which God must be forced and destroyed. But he uses them as symbols which by their very design point in the direction of a fuller meaning. To speak of God's intelligence, for example, is not to measure God by the ruler of our mind but it is to use our minds to point in the direction of their fulfillment which the word of God, of all words, appropriately indicates. When Thomas speaks of the goodness of God he does not make our limited sense of value the measure of God's worth but he bespeaks the unending potentialities of what we know to be good.

Those who have tried to avoid philosophical deicide by refusing to philosophize in theology have in fact contributed as much to the death of God as those who pull the trigger because they have left God defenseless in the only arena in which the attack could take place. What ardent connivance we see these days among those who disguise their guilt for not defending God by trying to build a religious edifice without any mention of Him. The sincerity of Bishop Robinson, Harvey Cox and others cannot be questioned, but the futility of their efforts must be scored, for they accept as an unquestioned condition of contemporary man that God is dead and then attempt to console man with the "good news" that it really doesn't matter.

No, it wasn't St. Thomas who killed God, though some Thomist may have killed the question of God's existence by misstating the evidence and underrating the cogency of objections against God. What has been assassinated in the conflicts of contemporary theology has not been God, but the weak and sometimes contrived arguments of his defenders. Since only false gods can be killed and the true One can be presumed to take care of Himself, let the murderers of God fire away. As dangerous and unpleasant as the ensuing havoc may be, the simple truths of philosophy and theology can only emerge the stronger, if for no other reason that in such wild confusion many a false objection reveals its own weakness or is felled by the random shot of a fellow conspirator.

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WHERE TO?

As the Students She
Produces, Providence
College is Pointing
Toward the Future

IN SEPTEMBER OF 1964 the college administration established an Office of Development, with its first assignment the coordinating of all the resources of the college in the creation of a Master Plan to chart the course of the institution for the ten year period from 1967 through 1977.

The enormity of the task was far greater than anyone anticipated. Now that it is nearing its conclusion — the plan should be ready this Spring — it is safe to say that all who have been concerned with it consider this to have been the most stimulating, exciting and far-reaching project the college has ever undertaken.

Every department of the college has been involved. Faculty, staff, student and alumni opinions were sought



out and listened to with careful attention. Majority reports, minority reports (sometimes from a minority of one) off-hand opinions, carefully documented research papers, studies made at other campuses, newspaper and magazine articles — all have been grist for the mills of the committees, which, like those of Gods, “grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small.”

It all began simply enough with the activation in November of '64 of the Academic Planning Committee, which included representatives of all the college's departments. Each department was asked to project its needs and aspirations for the next ten years.

It became obvious immediately that this could not be done until certain questions basic to the future of the college itself had been resolved. So, a Sub-committee on Education Directions was established in December and the Development Office drew up a list of questions for this committee's study.

How far should enrollment expansion go? What physical needs would be created by further expansion? Is our curriculum meeting today's needs and can it be adapted for tomorrow? What are our strengths and weaknesses?

In the light of developing national and community needs what is the best role for Providence College? Should we become a university? What about continuing education? What size should our classes be? Should we consider Trimester or other full calendar year plans?

These were just a few of the problems posed. In attempting to provide recommendations for the administration, the subcommittee began a thorough, objective analysis of the role of the college in the society it serves. It asked itself further questions: What kind of college should this be? Is it the institution it started out to be, and if not, what is its new purpose?

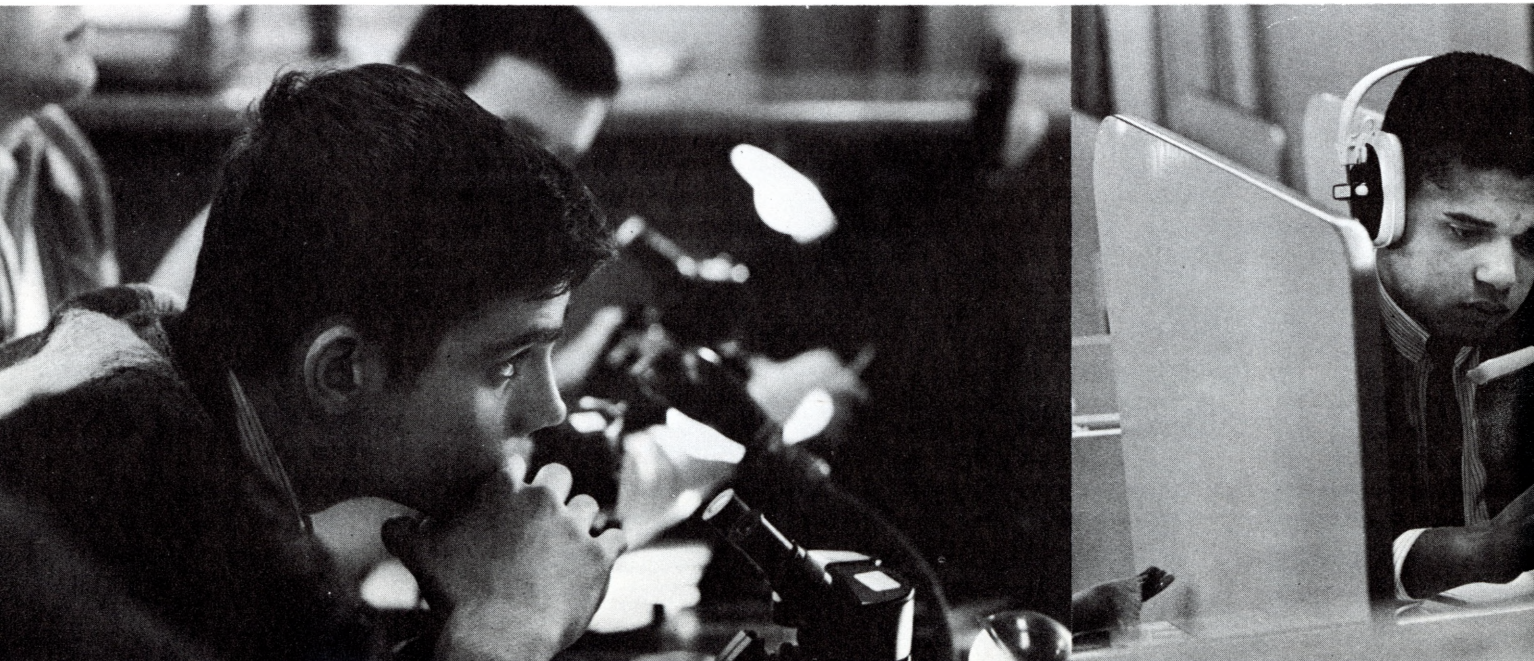
The committee has met weekly, in a spirit of free and frank discussion. It resolved from the beginning to salaam to no sacred cows of tradition but to examine every facet of the college to find out why we do what we are doing and to see if there might be a better way.

The process of determining where we want to go has brought about a much clearer understanding of where we are and where we have been.

A subcommittee examined the college's charter and made specific recommendations with regard to establishing a Board of Trustees. Another group studied the composition of the faculty and made many recommendations for new procedures for faculty rank, promotion and tenure.

Still another special subcommittee did a monumental job of assessing the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and has suggested major revisions.

Faculty salaries, future physical plant needs, staff requirements, the administrative organization, the selection and terms of department chairmen, faculty meeting



procedures, tuition costs, teaching methods, financial philosophy, relationships with the community — all of these matters and more have been part of the study.

In some instances the final formulation of a single sentence resolution has taken the better part of two hours, but the spirit of understanding, mutual respect and intelligent compromise that marked the deliberations of the subcommittee from the beginning has brought about a remarkable unanimity of opinion in the vast majority of its conclusions.

The full details of this plan are not yet complete. In essence, however, the plan will recommend to the administration that Providence College continue to remain a liberal art college for men, with a limited graduate program whose main purpose is to enrich the undergraduate program; that the enrollment of undergraduate students, now 2600, not be increased beyond 3000 in the next ten years; that additional physical facilities are urgently needed, not for enrollment expansion but in order to provide the best possible educational oppor-

tunity for a student body of our present size; that the future of the private college, even its survival, will demand emphasis on quality.

While this study is nearing its conclusion, the firm of Sasaki, Dawson, DeMay Associates, nationally known architects with extensive experience in campus planning, is working on a Master Plan for the physical needs of the college for the next ten years.

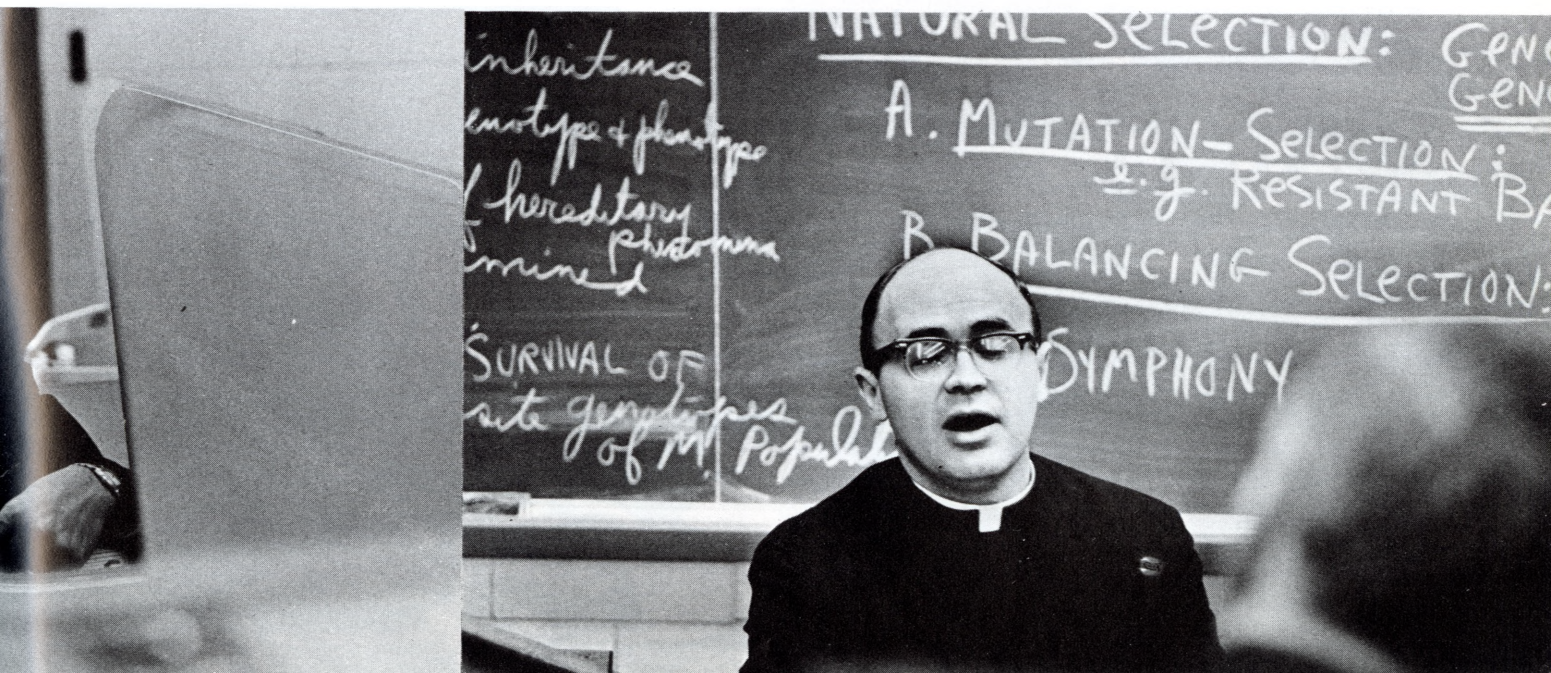
They will recommend locations for proposed new buildings, roads, pedestrian paths, etc., as a guide to physical development over a period of years toward a campus that is efficient and beautiful.

The two plans taken together will give the college administration a set of guide posts for the future which represents the best thinking and information currently available. With the passage of time, policies change and more and better information becomes available, so that these plans must be periodically studied and revised in the light of new developments.

The ultimate decisions on the steps recommended in both Master Plans will be made, of course, by the college administration. To provide the administration with a source of continuing counsel, guidance and judgment, based on broad experience, the Development Office also began in December of 1964 the establishment of a President's Council composed of civic and community leaders.

Though still in its formative stage, this Council has already proven to be of inestimable value to the administration. The Council has met with members of the administration and given its advice on several major decisions which the college faced and that advice has been followed and proven right.

So far, eighteen men have accepted membership on



the Council which has been planned to eventually number about thirty. The membership at present includes:

Cornelius C. Moore, Newport attorney; Joseph W. Ress, president of Adams Mfg. Co.; Frank A. Gammino, president, M. A. Gammino Construction Co.; Earl Dugan, owner, Ganley Co.; Joseph L. Byron '40, business manager of the college; Very Rev. Msgr. William J. Carey, '40, Rector, Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul, Providence; Walter E. Murray '28, president, Crown Chemical Co.

Felix Miranda, president, Imperial Knife Co.; Joseph A. DeMambro, president, DeMambro Radio Supply Co.; Aram P. Jarrett '38 wool merchant.

Robert H. I. Goddard, Jr., Brown & Ives, real estate; John Simmen, president, Industrial National Bank; Michael A. Gammino, Jr., president, Columbus National Bank; J. Howard McGrath, '26, Providence and Washington attorney; John F. Cavanagh '35, president, J. F. Cavanagh & Sons.

Clarence H. Gifford Jr., president, Rhode Island Hospital Trust Co., John Gill, president, Petroleum Heat & Power Co., and Clark Simonds, partner, G. H. Walker & Co.

The Council gives the college the benefit of top management competence, top financial competence, top legal competence, and broad experience in many fields.

By this Spring the Council should reach its full membership in time for it to study the two completed Master Plans and make its recommendations for action.

When the final decisions are made, Providence College will know where it is going and how to get there. It will know because so many people of good will have volunteered their time and talent to work for the common good of the college and the society it serves.



The Marketing Revolution

by Dr. John J. Breen

MARKETING presently dominates production. This situation reflects a change that has evolved over many years.

These activities, marketing and production, may be said to comprise the work of business organizations. Production changes the form of materials. In production, wood may be cut, glued, stained, and polished with the result that it acquires the more useful form of chairs. Marketing directs the flow of goods to users. The marketing activities include selling, physical distribution, and product planning. In selling, potential chair users are persuaded to buy the chairs and ownership is transferred to them. In physical distribution, the chairs are stored and moved until they are actually possessed by users. In product planning, decisions aimed at increasing salability are made on the characteristics of the chairs offered.

Since the chairs must be produced and marketed, both marketing and production are necessary. The relative importance of production and marketing may and has differed. The Industrial Revolution made production dominant, whereas the occurring marketing revolution has made marketing dominant.

The change of the Industrial Revolution was a rapid advance in technology. Starting in the latter part of the eighteenth century, power was harnessed and techniques were developed to better handle materials. Factories appeared in which there was a greater reliance on machines than on human hands to produce large amounts of standardized products. Specialization increased as the factories and areas tended to concentrate on particular kinds of products.

From the advances in technology and specialization came a substantial lowering of the costs of producing goods and new products. The lower costs meant lower prices which increased the attractiveness of the goods. The new products offered new consumptive experiences that made them attractive. Hence from production came the characteristics that made goods salable. Production thus tended to dominate marketing.

Marketing was also affected by the Industrial Revolution. For the factories to operate, buyers had to be found for the goods produced. For factory and area specialization to be possible, the products of different areas had to be exchanged. Production advances thus increased the importance of transferring products to users.

The greater importance of marketing was evident in the growth of middlemen, particularly the wholesalers and retailers, who assumed much of the task of bringing the goods produced to users. It was evident in the increasing proportion of the final price of the goods accounted for by marketing activities and was evident in the greater magnitude of the marketing job. As the goods produced increased and the tendency to specialize continued, more goods had to be marketed, and buyers had to be found at increasing distances from production locations.

This increased importance of marketing did not initially mean that production lost its dominance. The shortage of goods, the relative lack of competition, the substantial product improvements that came from the technical advances, and the production efficiency that came from standardized products meant that marketing had a role subordinate to production. Marketing's task was the selling of what was produced.

The continuation of the trends that emerged with the Industrial Revolution resulted in a situation in which marketing became dominant. Continued technical advances and increased production facilities made more and more goods available. As a result buyers came to have a choice, to have the products of different sellers to select from. And sellers came to have severe product competition: they could no longer sell their goods merely because they had been produced. The magnitude of the task of finding buyers and transferring goods to them increased until marketing costs amounted to roughly half of the price users paid for goods. Technical knowledge spread. As a result, the importance of technical knowledge in differentiating the products of sellers decreased substantially.

In this situation of production competition, of high marketing costs, and widespread technological knowledge, the marketing revolution occurred. Marketing considerations became more important than production considerations in the securing of sales and profits.

Firms became consumer orientated. For markets where the products of other sellers were readily available, firms abandoned the view that success came from merely producing at lower costs, selling harder, or producing products in line with efficient production capabilities. They adopted the view that success starts with a focus on the consumer, with a consideration of his needs and desires, and that sales and profits result from efforts to satisfy his needs with products tailored to his interests. As an executive of the Pillsbury Company stated: "Our attention has shifted . . . from the product we *can* make to the product the consumer *wants* us to make." Marketing considerations thus came to dictate what was offered.

Firms became more concerned with marketing costs. The high cost of marketing activities offered the opportunity to lower selling prices by reducing marketing costs. Firms thus tended to abandon the view that salesmen are born, and expended effort on careful selection, training, and supervision of salesmen. They tended to abandon the idea that consumers, because of great variations in personality, were unpredictable and to study carefully and formally buyer interests and desires. Added efforts were made to decrease the importance of human labor in marketing activities. Advertising with its low cost per contact tended to replace personal selling with its high cost per contact. Technical advances in transportation storage, and information systems were adopted.

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“... The awareness of the importance of marketing consideration is still unappreciated by many...”

Firms thus became very aware that marketing efficiency could affect marketing success.

Firms also increased their interest in marketing innovations and became willing to make changes not only in products or for cost reasons but also in the way the marketing functions were carried on. This often involved a willingness to sell their products in new locations, such as suburban areas and subways, in new ways, such as by vending machines and leasing, and in new outlets, for example, selling soft goods in drug stores and supermarkets. Firms increasingly attempted to insure buyers of the usefulness of purchased products by warranties and repair services. To increase the effectiveness of their dealer organization, firms developed such policies as exclusives, selective selling and franchising. The importance of these and other marketing innovations was increased by the decreased technical differences in the products of sellers due to the widespread availability of technical knowledge. Changes in the way the marketing functions are performed thus came to be recognized as an important way to market success.

This revolution in the relationship of production and marketing has been occurring for some time during this century. The buyers' markets that caused sellers to be more concerned with buyer interests and desires began to appear for various products in the early part of this century. However, it has been in the years since World War II when executives have been faced with the situation of severe product competition, high marketing costs, and widespread technical knowledge that marketing considerations have clearly dominated.

This revolution, this shift in the relationship of marketing to production, is only a shift in relative importance. The importance of technical advances that bring lower prices and new consumptive experience has declined relative to marketing considerations. Marketing considerations, the consumer orientation in product planning, the efforts to reduce marketing costs, and the innovating in marketing practices have increased in relative importance in the bringing of sales and profit results. Furthermore, this shift is still occurring. The awareness of the importance of marketing consideration, though always appreciated by some, is still unappreciated by many.

That the marketing revolution has occurred may be seen in the behavior of sellers in their markets. It is clearly evident in the new product policies of sellers, in the expanding marketing role of manufacturers, and in the acceptance by executives of the terms “marketing” and “marketing concept.”

In recent years there has been a high rate of product innovation. Sellers continuously offer new products to secure sales. Such new products are often important in total sales of firms. Of General Electric's 1962 sales of electrical housewares, for example, 67 percent resulted from products introduced or redesigned during the preceding seven years. Of the foods sold in 1963,

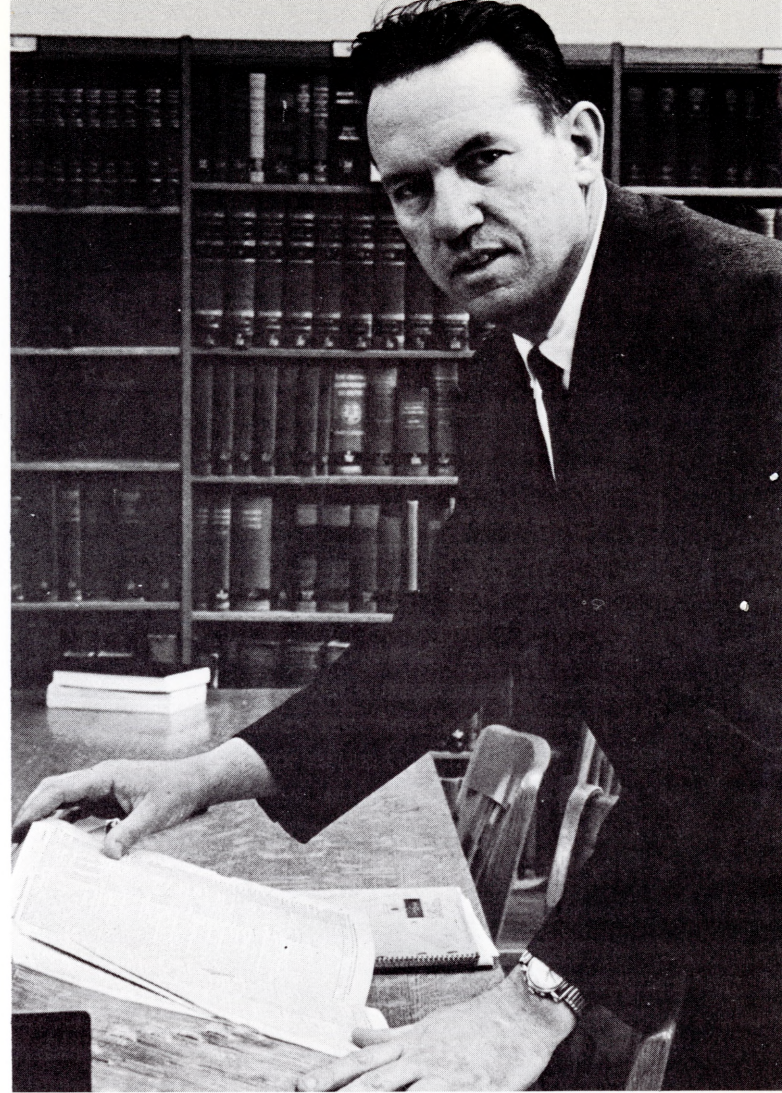
two-thirds did not exist ten years ago. The new products offered, however, often reflect variations on existing products rather than substantial product innovations. The "newness" of television sets in recent years, for example, has been in the rather superficial characteristics of size, shape, and design. The newness of automobiles in recent years also has been in the rather superficial characteristics of size, shape, and accessories. These changes, however, reflect efforts to satisfy buyer desires in sets and cars offered. And because of the functional similarity of the products, these superficial differences are relatively important in buying decisions. These aspects of present markets, the high rate of product innovation and the superficial character of many innovations indicate the great importance of the marketing function, product planning, in securing sales. And they indicate the dominance of marketing considerations in products offered over production considerations.

For many years, manufacturers have been increasing their role in the marketing of their goods. They have been assuming functions formerly performed by middlemen. They often advertise to users. This advertising enables buyers to make purchasing decisions before contacting middlemen with the manufacturers' products. Manufacturers have thus made retailers, for example, much less important as advisors of consumers. There is a tendency for manufacturers to perform more of the storage function. General Electric and Westinghouse, for example, now have arrangements that enable retailers to carry samples of products and to draw items sold from nearby inventories of the manufacturers. Manufacturers have been replacing middlemen handling their products. The sales of manufacturers' branches and offices have been over 25 percent of all wholesale sales for some time, and this percentage has been increasing. At present, manufacturers appear rather willing to do their own retailing. Chrysler, U. S. Rubber, Goodyear, and other manufacturers have recently either opened retail outlets or increased substantially the number of retail outlets they operate. This continual expansion of the role of manufacturers in the marketing of goods means an increasing importance for marketing considerations in their planning.

The term "marketing" has in recent years come to be widely used. In the organization charts of firms, "marketing" executives are increasingly found. This greater use of the term marketing reflects a shift in attitude. It reflects the adoption of the marketing approach to sales results, the recognition that many elements affect sales and the willingness to manipulate these many elements to secure sales. It reflects less reliance on, and a lessened importance for, purely persuasive efforts, or selling, in securing sales. This attitude shift thus indicates a greater awareness of the total marketing task and the greater importance of marketing considerations in the thinking of managers.

"... The Marketing Revolution is a change that, in general, is desirable..."

Dr. John J. Breen is a professor of business administration at Providence College.



Finally, there has been, in recent years, much interest in the "marketing concept." The widespread acceptance of the concept by executives is evident in the speeches made about it and the discussions concerning it. A key element of the meaning of this concept is that the entire business organization should be consumer orientated. The adoption of this concept thus means a recognition of the dominance of marketing over production considerations.

The marketing revolution is a change that, in general, is desirable. The dominance of marketing considerations increases the likelihood that the goods offered and the marketing practices followed will satisfy buyer desires. The added attention to marketing activities means, furthermore, that they are likely to be carried on with increasing efficiency. To the extent permitted by buyer desires, mechanization and routinization are likely to reduce marketing costs with the result that consumers will be able to buy more goods and thus have higher standards of living.

The increased concern with marketing considerations evident in this marketing revolution, however, may be excessive, and as a result, undesirable. While marketing costs can be lowered, they are only a part of the total costs of goods. Lower prices can, and will, continue to come from reductions in production costs. Product innovations arising from mere marketing considerations tend to be rather superficial. It is from technical advances that the radically new products are likely to come. Frozen foods, for example, did not originate as a marketing innovation: they are the result of the search by a nonfood firm for a use for a freezing process that it had developed.

A dominance by marketing over production that is not excessive may be viewed as ideal. It means a consumer orientated firm. And it also means a recognition that consumer benefits in the form of new products and lower costs can flow from both marketing and production.

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