Wld Hlth 1969, No. July-August, pp. 4-15. LSD 1872

the quest

by John Taylor

"If youth is a malady, it is soon remedied." GOETHE

Columbia University is a group of handsome buildings on a high outcrop overlooking New York's Harlem. From the windows of one of the buildings, the Low Library, the President of the university has a fine view over a campus which, in spite of a series of student demonstrations in 1968, now looks calm and orderly. But although the view may not appear to have changed much, the windows have. They are now glazed with brick-proof, riot-proof plexiglass, a precaution taken by farsighted administrators.

It is not easy to decide whether those windows are for looking out, or for looking in. In earlier days there was no doubt —today we of the older generation are less certain who is holding the banana out to whom. We stand on the brink of space, and many of our children seem to be already launched on a private, extra-galactic trip, their long hair streaming in the unknown winds, their voices growing faint and difficult to understand.

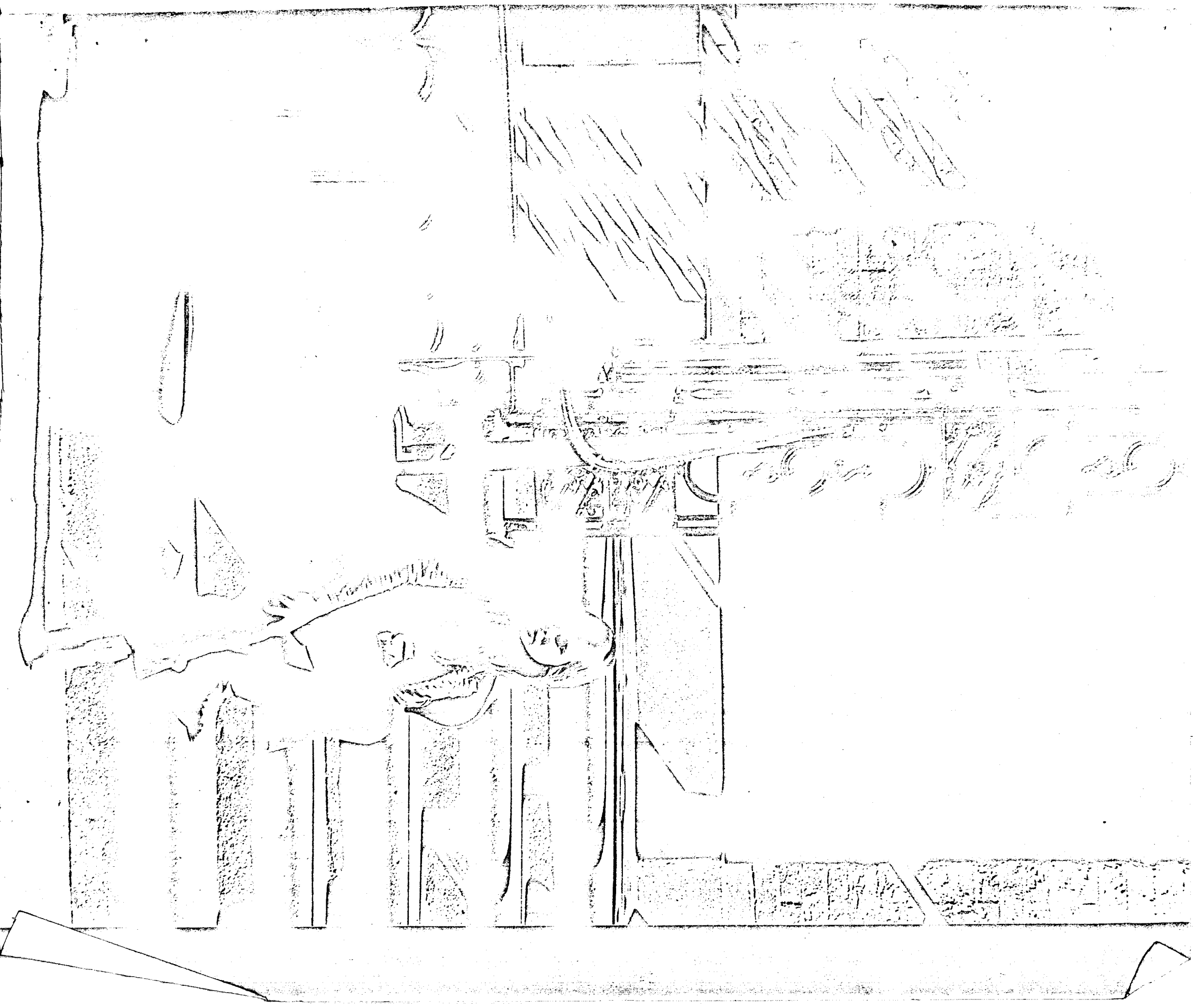
Like grass pushing up through concrete, they have made us conscious as never before of the force of change. It is a world force, a burning ribbon of challenge and dissent that circles the globe, linking Paris, New York, Zurich, Tokyo, London, Prague, Rome, Mexico City, Los Angeles, Berkeley, Chicago, disturbing the status quo, shattering the complacencies of things as they are. The young march in their thousands, chanting quotations from Mao Tse Tung, Che Guevara, Herbert Marcuse, and the college panty-raids of an earlier era seem suddenly dated, almost absurd, like the photographs in old newspapers.

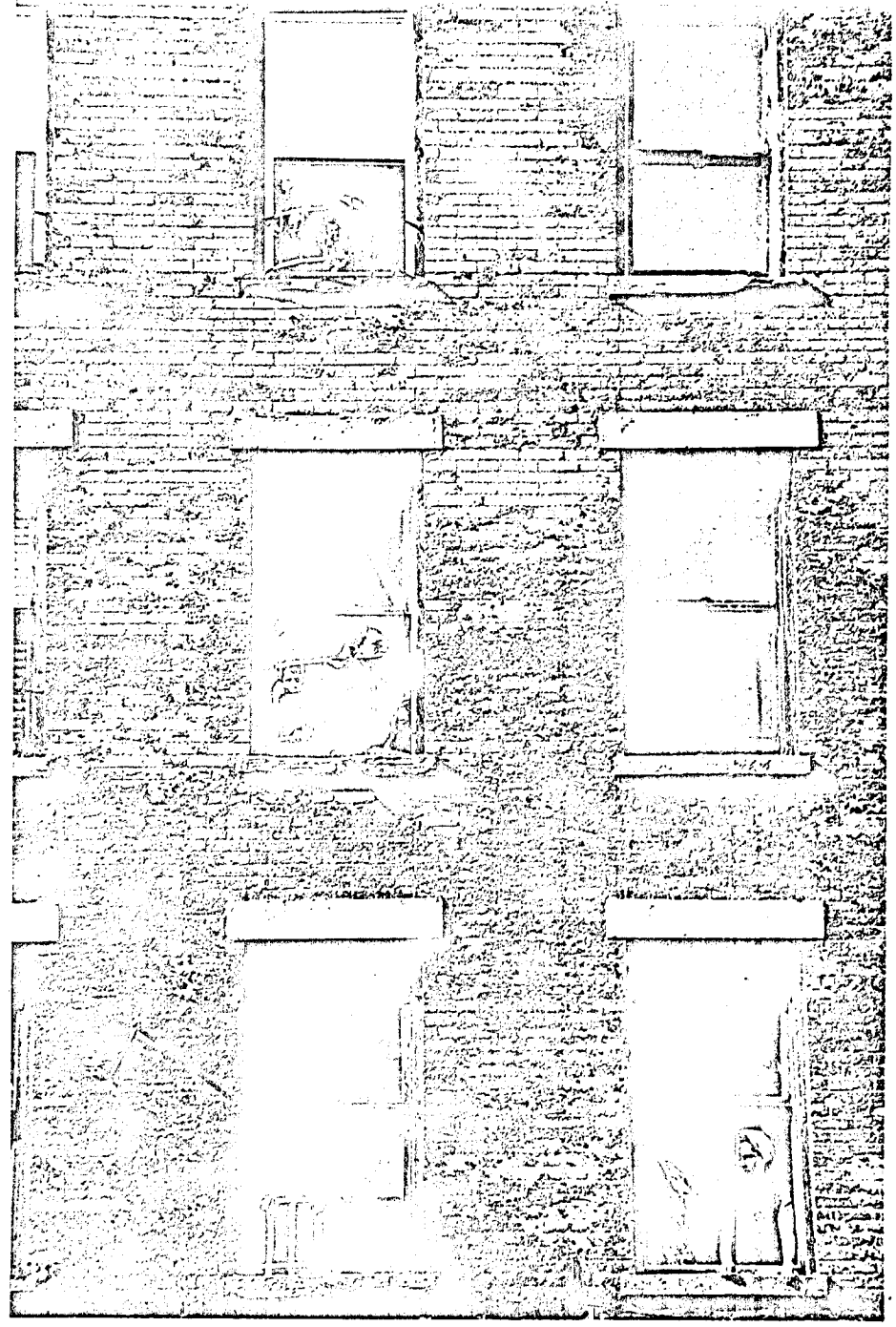
We have a break here, some kind of chromosomal change that seems to scramble the message that passes from one generation to another. This is not medieval youth climbing the pyramid to old age over the bodies of brothers and sisters carried away by everpresent death, or the youth of the Industrial Revolution crawling through mine-shafts to work 12 hours a day putting coal in baskets. Today's youth are the heirs to all our plans for social development, all our battles for health and progress, the children for whom we have fought cholera and smallpox, poliomyelitis and tuberculosis, poverty and disease. In theory, they should be grateful to us, and yet many of them seem to have turned away, like listeners to distant music, hastening after the pied piper and leaving us bewildered and alone in our prosperous burghers' mansions.

They have gone in search of something else, and it is curious to find that they all use the same maps and landmarks. Their quest has both active and passive elements, a violent, externalized aspect and at the same time an inwardness, an almost Eastern preoccupation with the self, with identity. It is a new kind of voyage, in a new kind of world, and the experience of previous generations is not of much more help than the legends of the Middle Ages were to Christopher Columbus. What is happening among modern youth is not confined to the United States, nor is it a specifically American problem. Our 20th-century society is all of a piece, and sooner or later we must all react to the same pressures, generated by the same urban technology. This article should be read in that perspective.

America is the land of the mental tourist, the watertight compartment, the separate yet coexistent. No one puts you in your compartment, you find yourself there by a process of self-recruitment. The ghetto is the system, the working arrangement, and it can be a collection of rotting slums, or a neat suburb with well-kept lawns and plastic dwarfs, or simply a place where you feel you belong. The district of Haight-

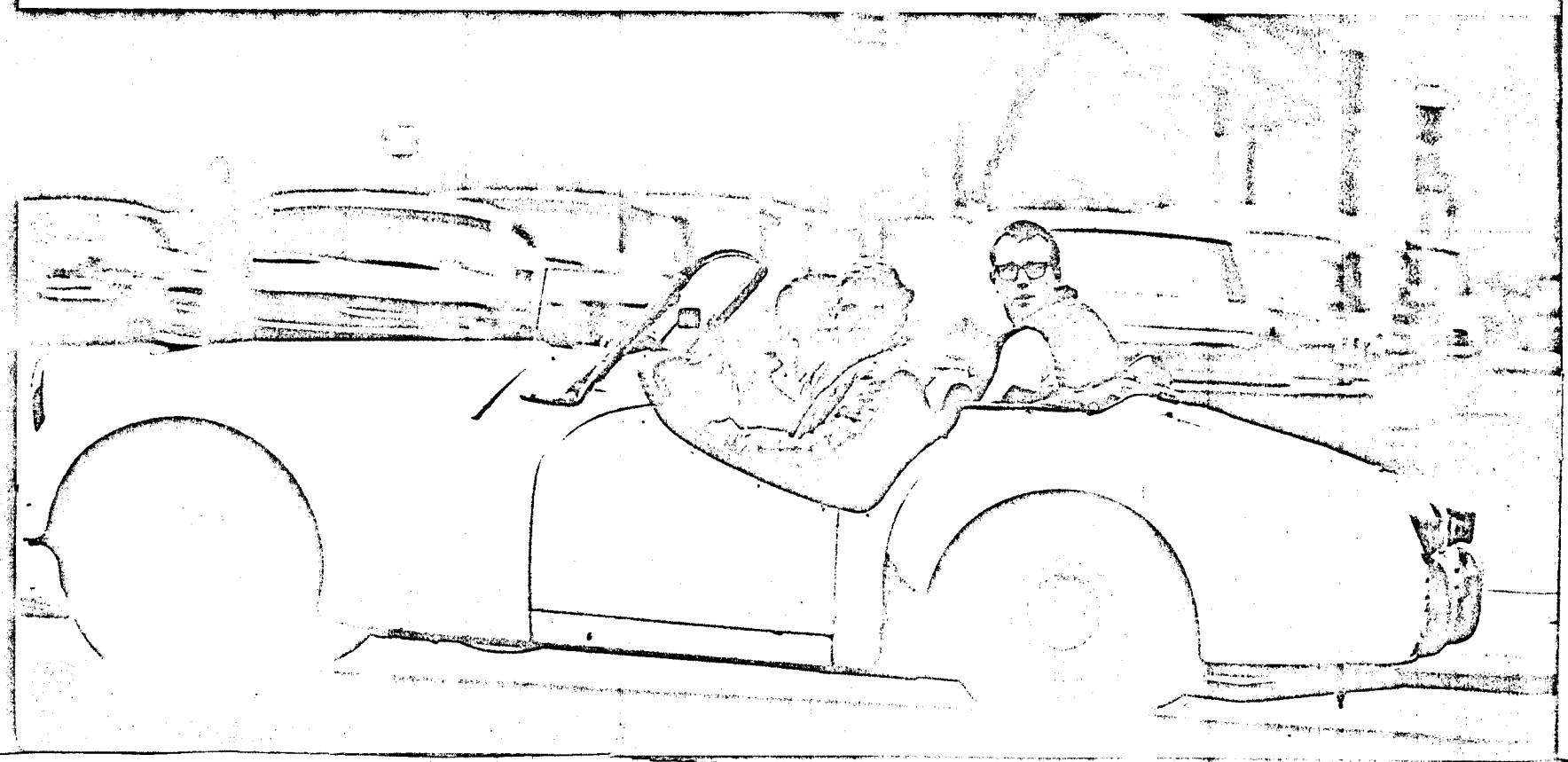
She no longer thinks of herself as just someone's daughter. (New York) ►





Some ghettos are chosen. Others are imposed. The one thing many young people seem to share these days is a desperate need to escape. (Harlem) ►

Fast automobiles give the temporary illusion that you are strong, virile, in charge of your destiny and speeding away from the places where you feel locked in. (Madison, Wisconsin) ▼



Ashbury in San Francisco is a drug ghetto, the Tir Na Nog of Celtic legend, a country of the young, most of whom take drugs.

It was, and to some extent still is, a nondescript lower middle class neighbourhood, an area of wide streets and terraced houses that would pass for a suburb of London or Brussels were it not for the occasional dusty palm tree that sprouts from a tiny front garden. It has several churches, a street of shops, an attractive park nearby. Yet it takes a certain amount of courage to walk through the area alone at night, because the Haight-Ashbury has become one of the teen-age "speed" addiction centres on the West Coast.

Once the capital of the flower children or hippies, the Haight-Ashbury has gone over to the amphetamines. Youngsters begin by raiding family medicine cabinets, because the drug is found in small quantities in the so-called pep pills and diet pills. As tolerance increases, they boost the dose. Many of those who begin with pills go on to intravenous injection, shooting the drug straight into the blood stream to get a "flash", a feeling of intense pleasure that invades the brain within seconds (hence the term "speed"). Then comes the biological price-tag the body has to pay—delusions of persecution, aggression, violence.

The atmosphere of the drug pervades the streets of the area. Haight Street, the main axis, is 15 blocks long, and its pavements are never empty, day or night. Driven by false stimulation to the mind and body, the teenagers who have gravitated to the city walk and stand and talk for hours at a stretch, moving restlessly up and down the street like aimless flotsam round a breaker in San Francisco Bay. You know that they are trying to communicate something to the world by the way they dress. Here a man arrayed like a Roman emperor in purple robes thrusts an underground newspaper at you, there a youth who is naked to the waist stomps down the street as if on his way to a public wrestling match. You see Davy Crocketts and Dalai Lamas, cowboys and Indians, priests and gurus, all jumbled together like extras in a film studio canteen at lunchtime.

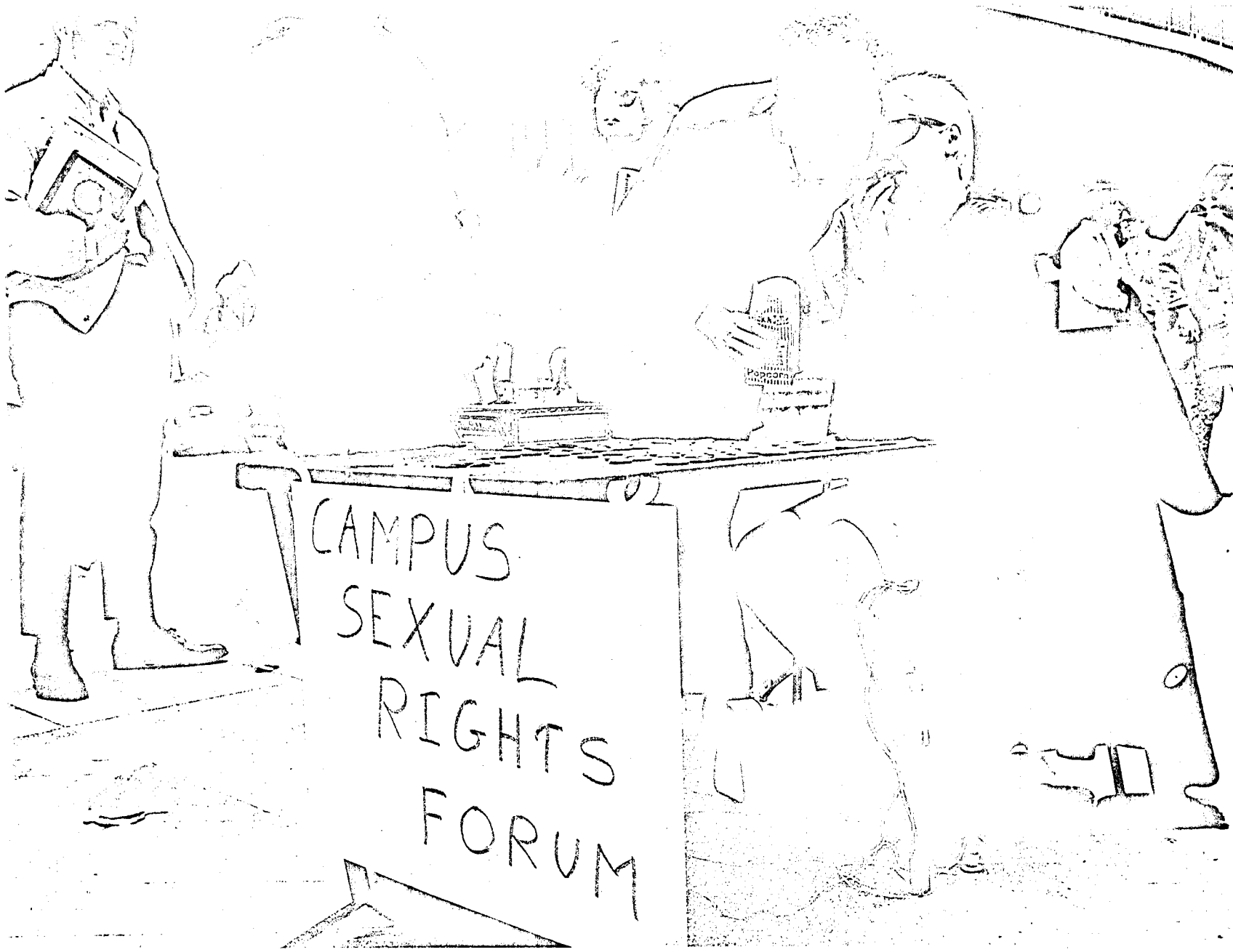
Seeking the runaways

Many of them carry a weapon—it is part of the paranoia. Some are children who have run away from home. In the church hall nearby there is a notice-board covered with letters and photographs, the yellowing, pathetic appeals from parents asking for news of sons or daughters who have vanished without trace in a continent 3,000 miles across. Here and there you may meet a student from one of the local high schools on a weekend drug binge. There is an occasional military deserter, using the intricate network of "crash pads" (apartments) in the Haight-Ashbury to escape the mesh of police check-ups. Some are already characters, stepping out of the pages of Damon Runyon. You are told of the Mad Chemist, who runs a drug laboratory. He is mentioned with The Investor, who provides the finance to buy barbiturates and amphetamines on the black market—capital and production allied to exploit the market, in a strange allegory of the world without.

But these attempts to glamorize the "speed" world are only a thin façade, quickly pierced by reality. The tourist-shops bravely keep up appearances, windows hung with button-badges, joss-sticks, candles, ikons, bangles, beads, statues of the Buddha. There are no hippies, however, to offer flowers as you walk, accompanied by the soft whisper "Spare change?" Instead, you become aware of the dirt, the peeling walls, the litter in the roadway, the cocoon of indifference that betrays the drug user. A bottle smashes suddenly in the gutter, and two teen-age prostitutes, one white, one black, fall out of a doorway, screaming and scratching until a pimp shakes them apart, while the bystanders watch impassively. The costumes are fake, too, because their wearers are not true hippies, but simply young people driven by the world in which they live to seek escape or excitement in the quick, slick pill or the needle.

They tell each other that "speed kills", yet the habit is steadily spreading, and notably in younger age-groups. The Haight-Ashbury Medical Clinic, a voluntarily run clinic that opened in June 1967, treated some 30,000 drug-using patients in its first 15 months of operation, and noted the marked increase of users of intravenous amphetamine among them. Dr David Smith, its director, found during a survey of the San Francisco area that 22 per cent of the 11th and 12th grade pupils at a suburban high school (age limit 16-18 in the European system) had taken amphetamines orally at least once, and 75 per cent had used the drug three or more times. "We find that oral use often pre-dates intravenous use," he says.

Here in the Haight-Ashbury, the "graduates" of drug-taking gather together, living in communal groups, protecting each other and at the same time preventing each other from escape. Besides the amphetamines, the drugs they use include marijuana and LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), and there are cases of multi-habituation involving the barbiturates and alcohol as well. A "speed" addict is likely to remain "high" on his drug for days at a stretch, injecting himself several times every 24 hours. To "come down", that is to return to some semblance of normality, he may swallow a mouthful of tranquillizers. He is on a trapeze, swinging between



Sexual freedom has taken on the overtones of a conscious revolution in many places. (Berkeley)

peaks of stimulation and valleys of depression. Finally comes the "crash", exhaustion, depression, psychosis. He runs the risk of severe brain damage, and the side-effects include malnutrition, respiratory infections, and a danger of heart attacks. Since the needle is seldom properly sterilized, cases of infectious hepatitis are frequent.

In a home for runaway teen-agers not far from Haight Street I talked to a boy of 17 who admitted that he had already experimented with marijuana, the amphetamines, and heroin. "I didn't have any way of finding out whether drugs were good or bad for me," he told me, "so I decided to try. After smoking grass (marijuana) for a while, I started shooting methedrine (one of the amphetamines). One trip I took lasted nearly a fortnight. I didn't want to eat or sleep—I just used to go out and talk to people and walk around all night. When I crashed I was so weak I couldn't make it from the bed to the ice-box to get some food. If a friend had not found me, I think I would have died like that—only a few feet away from a can of beans."

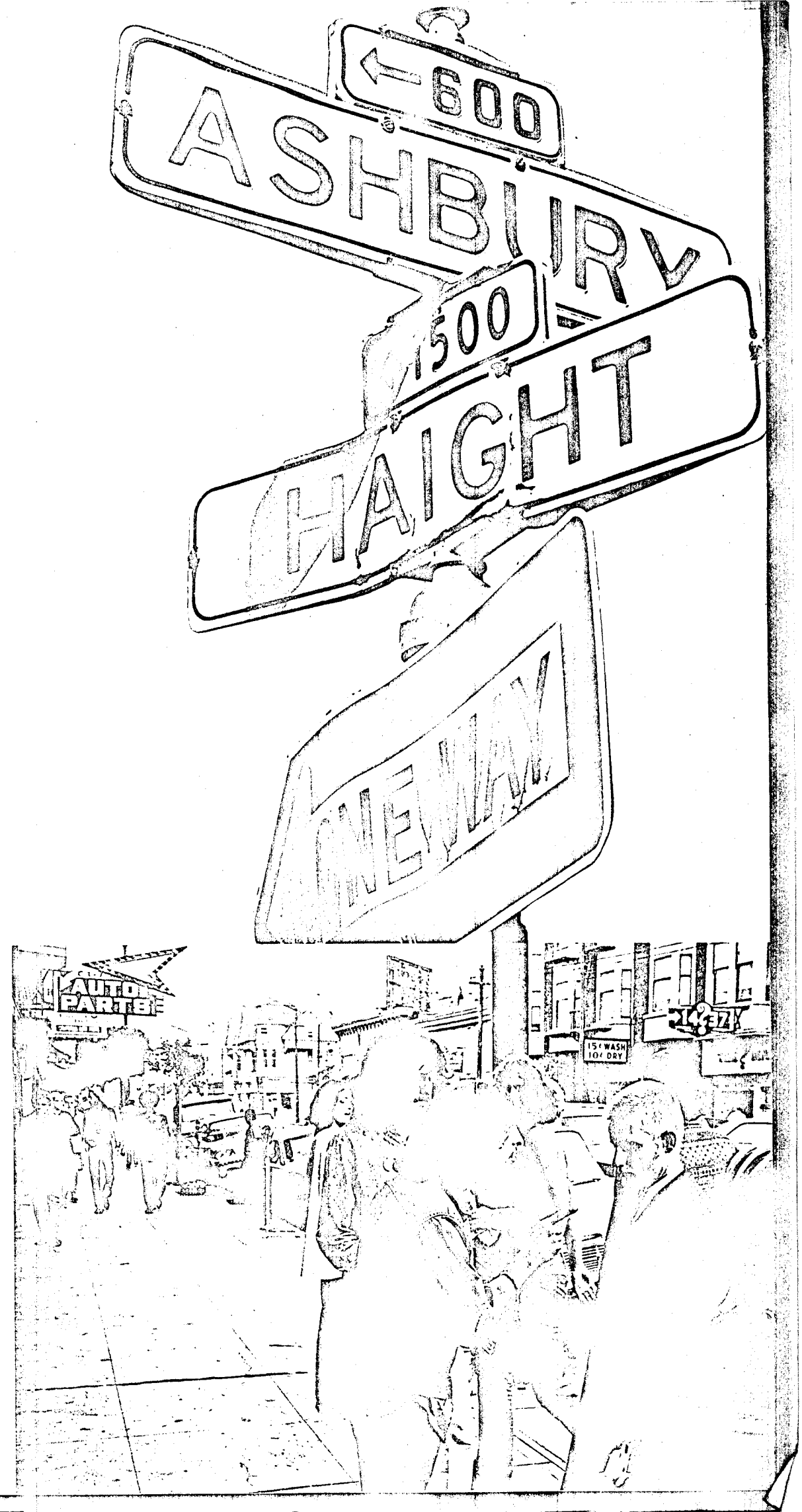
A typical young American? Perhaps not. Nor is the Haight-Ashbury a typical area of the United States. But what is happening there is a warning that among the young there are developments and trends of whose full dimensions we are only now becoming fully conscious. "Mom, everybody smokes pot" was the headline on an article in a leading American women's magazine recently. It underlined the fact that drug-taking has become a phenomenon linked with middle-class youth, with school, college and university. "Hard" (physically addictive) drugs like heroin are still associated with crime, poverty and prostitution, but the "psychic" drugs like marijuana, LSD and the amphetamines have become the symbol of an earth shift, the flickering needle on the social seismograph.

They are one of the symbols of a revolt by a generation who reject what they see around them, and who are moving, not without soul-searching, to new positions. In a bar near the Berkeley campus of the University of California I asked a group of students how they got on with their parents. "From the age of 14 to about 17 I spent a lot of time arguing with my

parents about politics," a boy volunteered. "Now we have a kind of arrangement that they go their way and I go mine. I respect them as human beings, but I don't agree with most of the ideas they have." A few days later, I asked a student at the University of Columbia in New York what he thought of the national political system. "I am politically minded," he replied, "but as the American political system is at present constituted I don't want any part of it."

Dissent broadens down from the family, the political system, to society itself. The runaway teenager I met in San Francisco had already made up his mind. "I don't think society offers me anything," he said thoughtfully. "What we are going to have is a whole generation of anarchy, and when that is over we can start building again." He had already taken the first step by leaving home, joining an army of young fugitives whose numbers are steadily increasing. By making experiments with drugs, he joined another army, equally secret, but about which we can make informed estimates. In California, for example, about 10,000 juveniles were arrested in 1967 on charges connected with marijuana. Surveys on university campuses from the West to the East Coast indicate that one student in five has tried the hallucinogenic drugs at least once, and more than a quarter of the others have considered doing so. Projected nationwide, this could mean that about 1,300,000 students have used marijuana, and another 1,000,000 might do so if they were given the opportunity.

It is a movement inwards, to the country of the mind, where the individual is again the centre of the universe, freed from the



Haight-Ashbury, San Francisco. "If you don't agree with this consumer society, why don't you drop out?" is the extremist's challenge.

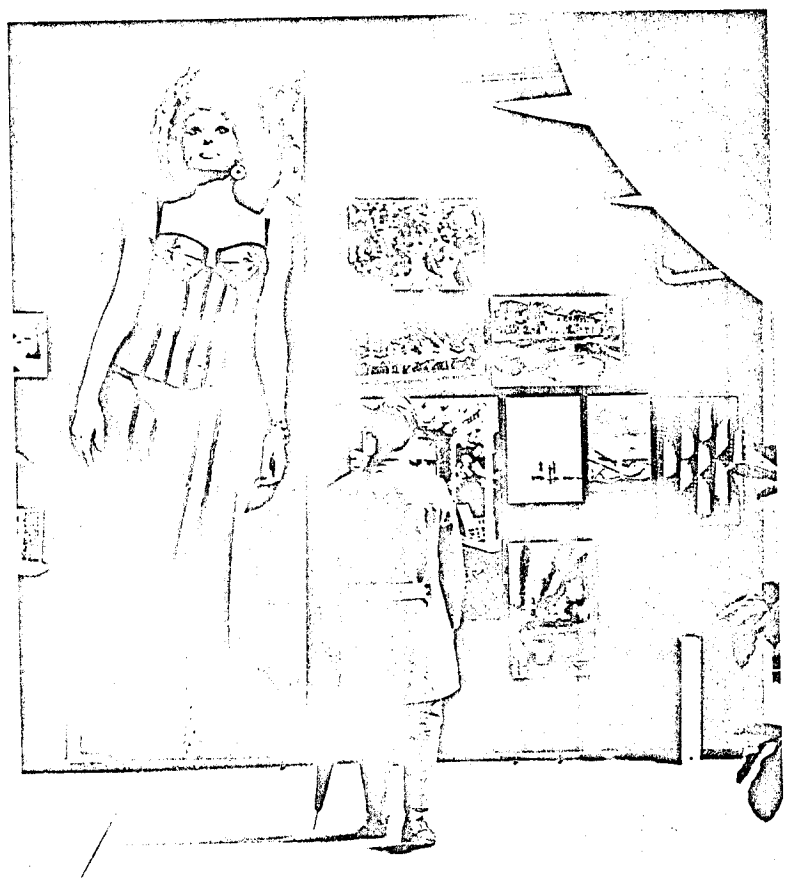
tyranny of physical objects. Writing in the 19th century, Théophile Gautier provided an elaborate description of the effect of hashish, which is a form of marijuana, on the human perceptions:

"Around me poured streams of gems of every colour, in constantly changing patterns. In the luminous air perpetually swarming myriad butterflies spread their wings like fans. Huge flowers with hearts of crystal, giant hollyhocks, lilies of gold and silver rose before my eyes and spread about me, with a sound like a fireworks display. My hearing became tremendously acute. I could actually hear the sound of the colours... A glass inverted, the creak of an armchair, a word pronounced in a deep voice, vibrated and rumbled about me like the reverberations of thunder."

Gautier's visions evoke a world of gaslamps, hansom cabs—and a much stronger and purer type of marijuana than is available in the "joints" (marijuana cigarettes) smoked by high school children on park benches. Nevertheless, many young people turn to the drug as the door to the secret garden, an alternative to a world which seems alien and forbidding. Against the sombre background of a street in New York's Brooklyn, I interviewed a 20-year-old college girl who was living in a community of young artists and dancers. She was engaged in an intellectual search for new values, — social, religious, moral and political. We stood in front of smoke-blackened tenement buildings and talked about Buddhism, astrology, sexual liberty, and drugs, the bizarre aspects of our conversation contrasting vividly in my mind with the grimly matter-of-fact surroundings.

Brought up a Protestant, the girl told me she had turned away from Christianity because it seemed to her "unreal and hypocritical". While she opposed the idea of promiscuity, she also rejected the imposed

Adults may complain of adolescent preoccupation with sex but young people are assailed with sex at every turn. Cosmetics, clothes, cigarettes and cars are advertised as means to be sexually desirable; but this commercialized sex doesn't relieve loneliness.



taboos of organized religion. "Sex is an expression of love," she commented. "To lay down rules about it only turns people into mental adulterers." She hoped to find in Eastern mysticism an alternative to the organized religion of the West, and said she had begun a quest for her own identity through the use of marijuana.

"It is sort of scary when you take pot (marijuana) at first," she admitted. "You become more aware of everything. You can hear your body digesting food, and the blood flowing through your veins and arteries. I get the feeling that I can see through people, and know what they are thinking, so I can tell who my real friends are. And basically it helps me to become more aware of myself, to find my own personality. I need to know who I am, and to find what is true and real."

The themes of our discussion—dissent, exoticism, esoteric beliefs, freedom, drugs—recur again and again in conversations with the under-30s. "Our movement is psychedelic," a young sculptor from the community explained. "We use drugs to expand the mind. This way we can reach Nirvana, the state of ultimate bliss, without spending years in meditation." To achieve what has been called "instant Zen" he used LSD, a colourless, tasteless and odourless chemical colloquially known as "acid", and which has so powerful an effect on the human brain that it has been considered by military experts as a possible psycho-chemical weapon.

Attempts have been made to surround LSD with an aura of intellectualism, but it remains a drug with terrifying effects. A student in San Francisco who took two 100-microgram ampoules of LSD announced suddenly: "I am going to Europe," stepped out of a third-floor window and broke both his legs. A girl driven to a frenzy by the visions it induced tried to scratch out her eyes in a savage defensive reflex. Her sight was saved by a corneal transplant. Some researchers suggest that it may cause chromosomal damage, and links have been suspected between the drug and diseases like cancer and leukaemia. But the risks of mental damage are much greater. It is a drug which appears to influence in some way the human dreaming process, breaking down the barrier between sleep and waking, and is liable to cause semi-permanent or relapsing psychosis. Cases have been reported which associated it with violence, murder and suicide.

LSD—campus drug

In spite of this, it is a campus drug, although to a much more limited extent than marijuana. In a sample survey at two conservative universities on the East Coast, Yale and Wesleyan, it figured as a low but significant percentage of drugs used. Two per cent of the students who answered a questionnaire at Yale had used LSD at least once, and seven per cent at Wesleyan. At San Francisco State College, on the West Coast, a report showed that probably about 500 of the 8,000 enrolment, or over six per cent, had experimented with it.

While some of them may see in LSD the modern equivalent of the duelling scar, most college and university students place its use in some kind of philosophical framework, however specious. It is taken with a kind of religious solemnity, in certain places, at certain times, and in the company of chosen friends. The less well-informed LSD users are much more reckless, and may take the drug at a street-corner or mix it with amphetamines in a blind desire to escape from their environment and its problems by the quickest route available.

From the quick drop out via drugs, many young Americans come to the great drop out via the hippie trapdoor. Talk to a hippie, and you get the feeling he is gazing over your shoulder at a far-off vision of Utopia where all the prisoners of 20th-century urban life will at last find freedom. His slogan is liberty, "the right to do your own thing", and his hero is the American Indian. There are about a quarter of a million young people ranging across the United States at any time in the loosely-organized hippie "tribes", with the main camps around Los Angeles and San Francisco, the northern hills of California, Chicago, Detroit, New Mexico, and the East Village and Lower East Side of New York City.

It is a massive decision to play truant from life, work, marriage, the family, and all the irksome institutions of ordinary society. Knowing the prejudices of employers in favour of the trim hair-cut, the hippie deliberately lets his hair grow down to his shoulders, stops shaving, abandons the shirt, the suit, tie, shoes, everything that constitutes what he calls the "mask" of the individual. Then he moves out on to the highways of a vast continent like a nomad of the Sahara, wearing a long robe jingling with bells or a poncho and blue jeans, his feet pushed into moccasins or broken tennis shoes.

In San Francisco's Golden Gate Park I met a barefoot girl who described to me the plans she and her friends had made to start a hippie community in the hills near the city. "Our aim is to live without money, to abolish it altogether," she said. "We'll bake out own bread, and make our own clothes, and help each other. If we have children, they will be the responsibility of the whole group. The way we see it, the family system is old-fashioned and part of a structure we think is worn out. It's time to start doing things a different way, more like the early Christians who shared everything with each other." A few hun-

dred yards away traffic hooted and queued in a lunch-time snarl-up, the drivers perspiring in the hot California sunshine. She pointed to them and shrugged, as if further explanation was unnecessary.

Not all those who move in the hippie world are true hippies. On the same day in the park I was asked politely for money to buy wine by an unkempt figure who later turned out to be a teacher on sabbatical leave from a local college. He was studying the sociology of the hippie movement, but at the same time it was evident that he found the *milieu* not without its attractions. Some hippies do in fact work —in San Francisco they help to deliver the mail. A wealthy industrialist in Detroit told me that his daughter had left home to become a hippie, but had thoughtfully left a forwarding address to which he regularly sent money. The idea of dropping out completely is too chilling for many youthful spines, but the charisma of the hippie draws them nevertheless. So there are many "part-time" hippies and sympathizers, the so-called "plastic hippies" who go to school and college, or hold down a regular job, but who join the hippie camps and communities at weekends, and during vacations.

Some are merely following a fashion, others are thrill-seeking adolescents lured by the forbidden fruit of drugs and sex. No true hippie actually favours sexual licence; he advocates instead a relationship between the sexes that is free of the guilt that he claims is inculcated by institutional religions. At the lower levels the philosophy tends to get hazy, and hippiedom and free love inevitably become associated in many minds. But in essence the attraction of the hippie is that he is a leader in the search for an alternative society, whose duties and debts appear to offer more validity than those of the world in which the present generation find themselves. The basic themes recur again, drug experimentation, the cult of the esoteric, the victory of the inner personality, the attempt to arrive "where it's at", stillness.

The idea of giving up the American Dream, the house, the car, the washing-machine, is not to everyone's taste, however. I shot pool in a hall in San Francisco with a young Negro who made no secret of his attitude to the hippies. "As far as I'm concerned," he said, "they are throwing away everything which my people are fighting to get." He was a self-avowed member of the Black Panthers, an activist group who seek to bring about change by violence, either offered or provoked. Such violence erupts on the outer surface of the youth movement, and polarizes around other *groupuscules*, the Students for a Democratic Society—SDS, and the Yippies, adherents of the Youth International Party, from whose initials they take their name.

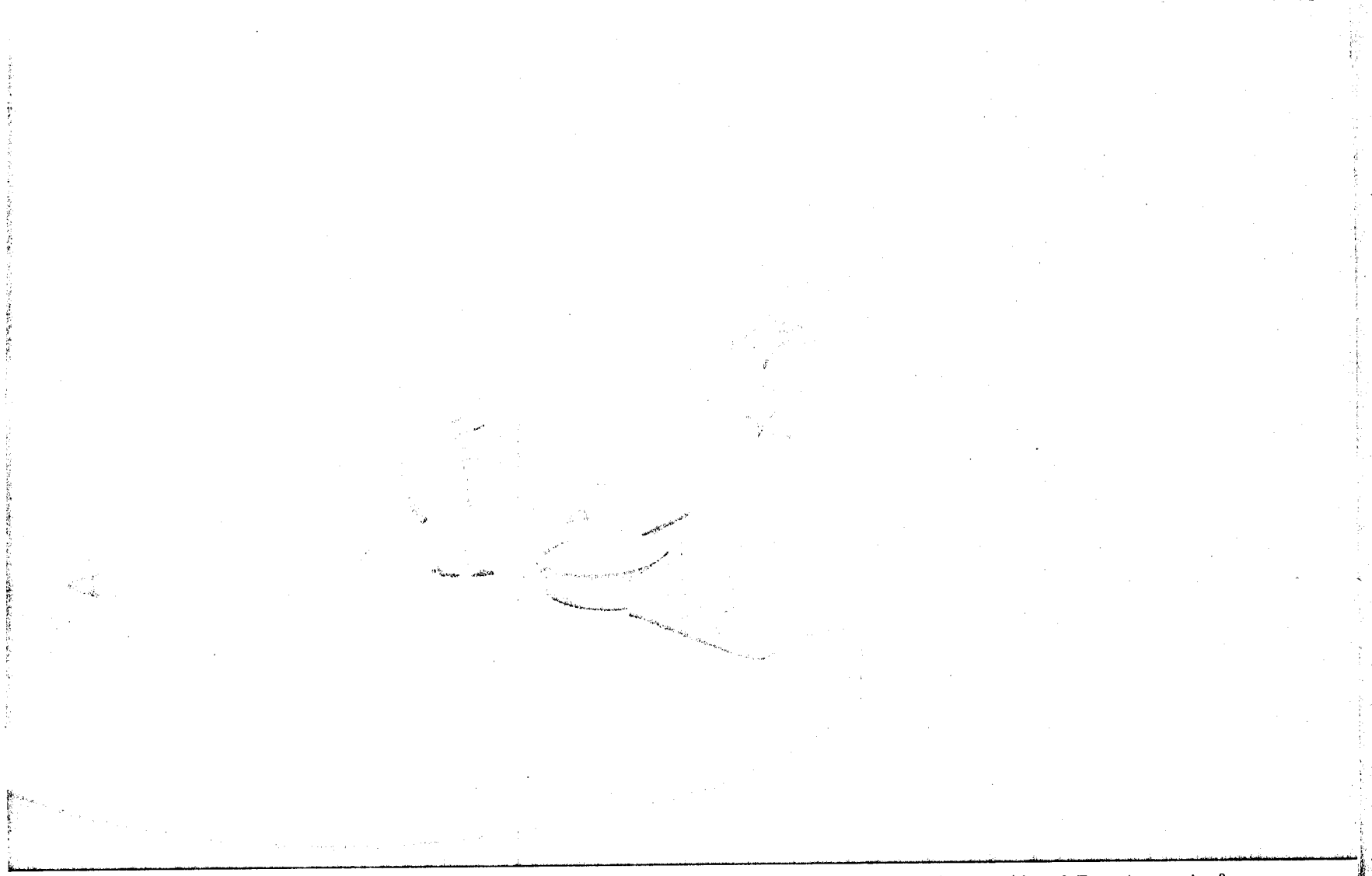
Underground society

These groups may be small in numbers, but have become adept in the technique of the apparent show-down which wins the loyalty and support of the uncommitted. There are plenty of examples. The sit-in at Columbia University in May of last year began quietly enough, but ended in 700 arrests. A few months later, youth demonstrations in the university town of Berkeley reached such a point that the community was for a period placed under "civil disaster" restrictions. The National Guard had to be called in to help police cope with demonstrations in Chicago during the Democratic Party Convention to elect a presidential candidate. At one period earlier this year, incidents were being reported which involved the use of troops or police at campuses in Massachusetts, North Carolina, Illinois, Florida, New York, Wisconsin, and California more or less simultaneously.

When combined, the dissenting students, the hippies, and their sub-elements form a new society within the American society, with its own heroes and villains, its own poets and troubadours, its own music, its own newspapers. Once again, it behaves at times like the society of its elders, producing its own tycoons and financiers. The support of American youth has enabled the Beatles to sell some 300 million records in about six years, and to acquire a gross income of about £1,000,000 a year. The marketing of folksongs and social satire on records is a million-dollar industry. There are about 400 so-called underground newspapers in circulation, some of them openly on sale at street kiosks for customers from the "straight" or "square" world, with a combined readership estimated at some seven million. The lapel button, with its crisply-worded, drug-orientated slogan, has become the in-joke of a generation.

Like any society, it throws up a characteristic pattern of public health statistics. The most significant shape emerges in relation to the venereal diseases. Since 1945, such illnesses as poliomyelitis, meningitis, measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, typhus and typhoid fever have shown a consistent overall regression in the United States. The trend reflects improved health services, rising affluence, and medical advances. On the other hand, syphilis and gonorrhea have rocketed upwards after a period of decline in the late 1950s, and in spite of the existence of the antibiotics. In 1966, two-thirds of all reported cases of primary and secondary syphilis, and three-fourths of the gonorrhea cases were patients between 15 and 29 years of age, an overwhelming correlation.

All this must, however, be viewed against a much larger background, the huge canvas of America itself. If an adolescent is too preoccupied with sex, it may be that he does not yet possess the automatic resistance to the eroticism of the 20th century that his elders have acquired



Why take drugs? Instant meditation? Doing what the gang does? Rejection of adult authority? Relief from problems? Experimentation?

by long conditioning. All around the young, on television, in the cinema, on the billboards, in advertising, the sex theme is heavily deployed. Sex means big business, and it is not only sold, but used to sell. Every year, teen-age girls are encouraged to spend more than $20,000,000 on lipstick and cosmetics. Stores sell brassieres for girls of nine and ten. Paperback pornography is an industry aimed at the young. Sex helps to sell cigarettes and cars. At the same time science has produced the anti-conception pill, thus removing the fear of pregnancy while increasing the risk of venereal infection.

The experiments of youth with drug-taking and social reconstruction are also part of that larger canvas. Finding themselves in a land of giants, they go in search of something that will reaffirm the human scale. Urbanization, for example, is dramatically affecting the American environment. About 70 per cent of the population of 200 million people now live in cities, which the car is busily converting to megalopolis, an asphalt landscape of Brobdingnagian dimensions. Man finds himself reduced to a crick-necked dwarf among the skyscrapers of the big cities; in Los Angeles, which covers an area of 400 square miles, walking is such an unlikely activity that a pedestrian in certain districts runs the risk of being arrested.

Age of the robot

The population of the United States is increased by one new human being every eight seconds, and only machines can cope with the steadily growing numbers. For every 50 people there is some kind of robot, answering the telephone, opening the door, serving food and drink, stamps, changing money, helping the lonely to choose a marriage partner, returning golfballs on the automatic range, setting up the bowls in the alley, washing the dishes. There are more than 70,000 students at the University of California, and only a computer can handle the administrative and clerical procedures. The student knows that his computer card is necessary, yet it dramatizes his sense of life without people, without contact, friendliness, or human concern. *

The hippie is not without his sympathizers in a country heavily geared to buying and selling. In his book *The Waste Makers*, Vance Packard has reported that a typical American family is exposed to more than 1500 selling messages on any average day via the mass media. It is a bombardment that keeps total spending by the population spiralling upwards. Material goods have become a means of identification in a mass-produced world. Go through an American suburb, and you will see that cars are parked almost invariably in the driveway, *outside* the garage, where they can be seen, admired, respected. To have is to be. Not to have is not to be. Hamlet could have solved all his problems by going to the supermarket.

Dr Helen Nowlis, a leading expert on student psychology, observes:

"Ours is an achievement-oriented, envi-

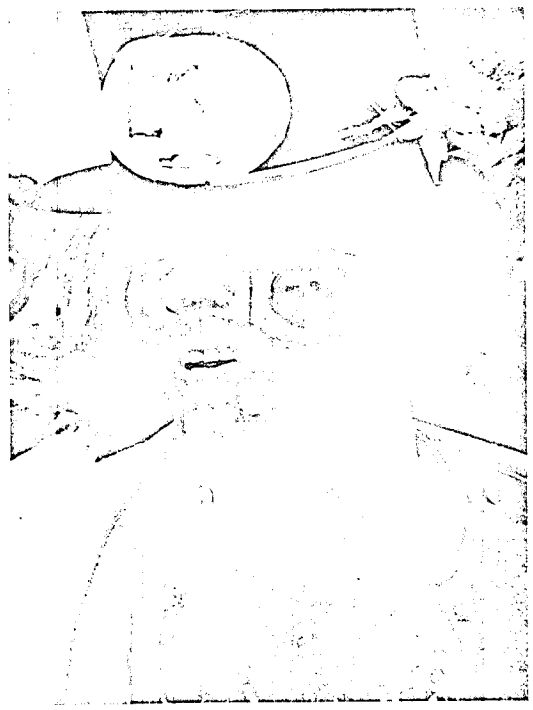
* In February of this year, rioting students at a Canadian University demolished two computers with axes.

ronment-dominating society which almost exclusively values and rewards intellectual or cognitive performance to the exclusion of a life of emotion and feeling. It is a society which often measures success and prestige in terms of material possession... Far more young people than those who turn to drugs are uneasy in this climate... They wonder if getting an education in order to get a job that will provide them with sufficient income to live in the suburbs and be miserable, become alcoholic, develop ulcers, get divorced, is worth the struggle. 'There must be something else.' The authors they read—Sartre, Hesse, Thoreau, Heller, Heinlein, Huxley, Bellows, Tolkien—are evidence of their searching."

Chemical crutches

In any case, some observers suggest that taking drugs is not so much a sign of rebellion as of conformity in a pill-oriented society. There are in fact many more people using, and misusing, the psychotropic drugs, the sedatives, tranquillizers and stimulants than such drugs as marijuana or LSD or even the "hard" addictive drugs like heroin and cocaine. In one year —1965—about 58 million new prescriptions and more than 100 million refills were written for psychotropic pills, capsules and tablets in the U.S. One adult in four uses one or more types, and nearly half the adult population has used one or more of them at some time. The television commercials constantly hammer home the theme that many of life's difficulties can be solved by swallowing a pill. There are more than 6,000,000 known alcoholics across the nation. In spite of warnings of the cancer risk, the average American smokes 3,860 cigarettes a year—the highest consumption rate in the world.

As for the world in which he finds himself, the ranging quest by America's youth is as much an indication of concern as anything else. Anthropologist Dr Margaret Mead dismisses the idea that activist American youth is in any way alienated. She suggested to me that in fact young people today could be regarded as a new kind of world immigrant, natives of the mid-1960s, acquiring and using experiences that their parents have not had, and at the same time not yet in possession of a historical sense, a consciousness of the



Drug-taking, long hair, weird clothes, make-up, all proclaim the revolt against workaday life. (USA)

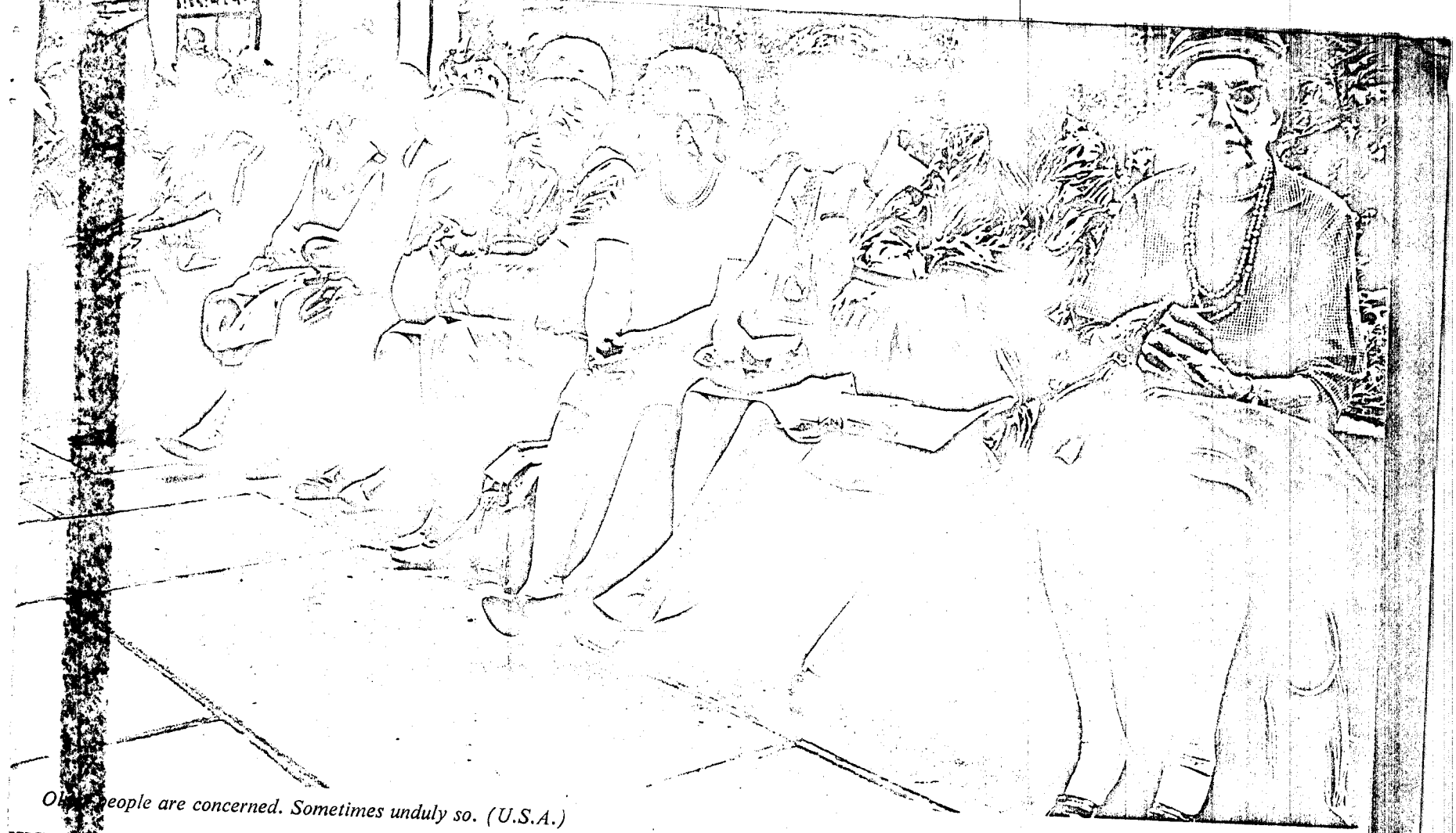
events that have helped to shape the present. "They think everything happened at once," she commented. "The Bomb, the population explosion, the problem of pollution of the streams, and they want to fix these problems—immediately. And they could be right—because it's just possible that if we don't find an answer to such problems, there won't be anything left to fix."

The youth of America, with the same restless idealism that produces campus demonstrations and bead-decked hippies, is already striving to tackle some of the issues. The college girl who described to me her experiences with marijuana spent her summer vacations helping to build playgrounds in ghetto areas. Those playgrounds are badly needed. In New York's densely populated Harlem, for example, more children are killed by cars than in the rest of the city because they have nowhere to play except the streets. An SDS leader I talked to at Columbia spent his summer vacations coaching children from underprivileged areas to help them pass their examinations. The lost young men and women of the Haight-Ashbury are watched over by youthful volunteers who devote themselves to rescuing wanderers and castaways, finding them food and shelter, making contact with their parents, helping them to return to normal life.

America is going through a period of readjustment. It is a time of change, painful, disillusioning, disruptive. It is also a time of hope, a moment when the new generation of Americans have reaffirmed the promise of the Declaration of Independence. Eldridge Cleaver, one of the leading spokesmen of the American Black Panther Party, has declared:

"There is in America today a generation of white youth that is truly worthy of a black man's respect."

Many grave problems face the people of the United States, problems of national unity, of poverty and deprivation, discrimination and injustice. It is a time for synthesis between the generations, a time to harness the dynamism and energy of youth and the experience of their elders for the tasks that lie ahead. In the wider world context, the need to involve the youth of our nations is no less urgent. We can now offer them the moon—it may be that they can help us preserve the old earth. ■



Ol[illegible]eople are concerned. Sometimes unduly so. (U.S.A.)

O[illegible]e quest is directed toward finding religious experience of some kind, at any cost (New York).