(Address given by the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., President, University of Notre Dame, at the Dedication Banquet of the Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Wednesday evening, March 30, 1966.)

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AN AGE OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION

A popular cultural history of the great ages of Western civilization characterizes the early and late Middle Ages as the Age of Faith, followed by the Romantic Renaissance, the Reformation, the Age of Reason, the Enlightenment, the Age of Political Revolution, and, for better part of the last century, increasingly in this century, we have the Age of Social Revolution. One could chart various ages of human knowledge the same way, without perfect overlap, but with some convergence. I believe that one might, without too great danger of over-simplication, say that the Ages of Faith were a golden age for theological knowledge, and that our age of social revolution has seen not only the birth in most cases, but also the flowering of the various social sciences.

No human knowledge exists or develops in a vacuum. It is the total ambient of man's culture and concern that is inviting or negating as regards the development of specialized human knowledges. The action is really an interaction once it begins, with man's new knowledge affecting his culture

just as his culture in a given age invites and nourished the new knowledge. We take this for granted when we observe how the industrial revolution encouraged and was in turn nurtured by a new technology, or see the interaction between the advent of a nuclear and space age and the rapid development of a wide range of new sciences and technologies that make this age so spectacular in its achievements. One other observation is important here, if we can assume that history repeats itself: the curves of new advances, both in culture and in knowledge, are not merely linear, but exponential. We have come, even in a matter of common speech, to describe modern developments as explosions -- the knowledge explosion, the population explosion. Culture and knowledge together are given to quantum jumps along new lines, even though one must always keep in perspective the age-long glacial movement of the total worldwide evolutionary process in culture and knowledge. One can also note historically that it is no simple matter to correlate the new quantum jumps with the totality of knowledge and culture existing at the moment of the explosive new advance. Faith in the old is shaken, institutions sometimes collapse, tradition is battered by new winds and waves of gale proportions, and the weaker souls totally and exclusively embrace the new as if man had

known nothing before. The new gain is often enough ambiguous in the face of the old loss.

Against this admittedly sketchy background, how do we relate the explosive growth of the social sciences within an explosive age of social revolution? I am prepared to assume that they are related in some way, although I am far from assuming that they are in fact related as fruitfully or as positively as they should be, or as fully, for example, as the new sciences and technologies are related to the nuclear and space age that is also in process today. How social sciences relate to the age of social revolution is the theme of what I have to say here today. This is by no means as obvious a relationship as that enjoyed by the physical sciences, but in the long run of man's history the relationship of the social sciences to social revolution may well be ultimately much more important than the relation of the physical sciences to the space age.

The recent investigation of the National Science Foundation this past year by the Daddario Committee of the House showed a more than casual concern for the development of the social sciences, even within the National Science Foundation. Why? Again we perceive the interwoven fabric of the social

structure. There probably would not be an age of social revolution without all of the new human opportunities made possible by the new sciences and technologies. On the other hand, the very existence of these new opportunities, whatever widespread human hopes they inspire, is no guarantee that most of mankind will indeed see these hopes realized in their lives. A great society might be postponed by a costly war. A world on the brink of development may see its means of development, both human and financial, moving mostly in another direction, for example, into the void of space. The spectacular may displace the pedestrian, even though ultimately pedestrian hopes for food and shelter and health and education are humanly more important. One might speculate as to whether Egyptian society might have had a longer life and a deeper influence if social justice had been chosen as the best goal instead of pyramids and monumental statuary to mark the tombs of past greatness. In any event, the Empire declined, relatively soon after the building of Abu Simbel which we are presently trying to save from the rising waters of the Nile.

No culture has an infinity of talent or energy -- not even ours. I suspect that latent in the Daddario Committee's concern was the thought that

somehow, in the complex inter-relationships that characterize modern society, the presence of a stronger social science, or more correctly of more articulate social scientists, might influence our nuclear and space age, as well as the whole broad world of social revolution in which we live.

At this point, I am perfectly conscious of the fact that I am opening the proverbial can of worms. But, I do so because I am convinced that while a cultural context may inspire a whole new set of human knowledges, such as the social sciences, these cannot grow and develop as they should unless they in turn are relevant to the problems that brought them into being. This may seem to be an excessively pragmatic point of view, but I believe it reflects the reality of the situation without excluding other values inherent in the social sciences themselves.

Here we face a dilemma of monumental proportions, indeed a crossroads where the turning one way or another may signal the ultimate fruitfulness or the ultimate demise of the social sciences in the context of modern culture. I realize that the immediate challenge and response is not quite so black and white, but again, ultimately, the dilemma is very real and must, I think, be faced in all frankness.

The social sciences are mainly parvenus among the sciences. They came

upon a field already largely occupied by the physical and natural sciences. It is human and understandable that, in an effort to be comfortable in already occupied territory, the newcomers took on the protective coloration of the place and times, adopting the reigning regime's proudest title of science -- as if this were the only source of respectibility and pride -- and adopting the title of science in an altogether too univocal sense.

There followed many other understandable developments: the amassing of data for the sake of data, the attempt to quantify the unquantifiable, the cult of mathematical verification in an effort to establish theories ultimately beyond mathematics, the worship of objectivity to an extent that often sterilized what might have been very fruitful research, the confusion between counting heads and establishing what are essentially philosophical norms, the blurring of what is average and what is truly significant, the development of so-called scientific terminology and occult nomenclature that allowed an esoteric statement of obvious fact to masquerade as scientific wisdom when it was in fact not only not worth stating, but was stated in murky and turgid rhetoric. Regarding this latter point, may I say that the inability to communicate signals the end of usefulness for any element in a culture, be it religion, art, or science.

This is obviously an overstatement of some of the reasons why the general public, as well as the physical and natural scientists too, refused to take much of early social science seriously. In attempting to be something it never can be, social science has at times prevented itself from the very important task it can and must perform to survive, to develop, and to be useful to the age that brought it forth and needs its strong assistance. Social sciences, it seems to me as an auslander, need desperately to find their own identities, to elaborate their proper fields of inquiry and their proper methods, and, I will add, all the social sciences need desperately to develop fruitful relationships with other human knowledges and other methods of knowing, without ceasing to be their own valid, honest, useful, and respectable selves. It is dangerous to thus categorize, in globo, all the social sciences, but I am willing to concede that my judgments weigh more heavily against some of the social sciences than others.

Perhaps I can best illustrate what I am trying to say here by citing an example from a field in which social science should have had great effect, but, in fact, did have precious little effect for many years: Civil Rights, and this,

despite the fact that it was for more than a century a problem central to the age in social revolution.

After about eighty years with no Civil Rights federal legislation, our Congress after a long and involved filibuster, finally enacted the Civil Rights Law of 1957. It became perfectly obvious during the discussion that there was a great dearth of simple factual information about the problem, and, because of this, all suggested legislative solutions were viewed with distrust and suspicion. Consequently, a great portion of the 1957 Act was devoted to the establishment of a six-man, bi-partisan federal Commission to acquire the facts, to assess them in light of the existing laws, and to make specific recommendations to the President and the Congress.

Eight years, and many volumes later, about 80% of all the Commission's recommendations have been enacted into federal law. How did this happen? First of all, the enabling legislation only spoke specifically of studying voting, but after some filibustering within the Commission (we, the members, were also evenly split North and South), we early decided to study Education and Housing, as well as Voting. Two years later, after many hearings, investigations, and

the publication of our first 1959 Report, it was decided to move into the additional fields of Employment and Administration of Justice. Thus, our 1961 Report covered a factual analysis of five fields in five volumes. The success of this approach would not have been possible if we had not decided from the start to make some value judgments (and they were far from obvious at the time, not to mention their being very unpopular). The most fundamental of these judgments diagnosed the organic nature of the problem and its ultimate solution, the inter-relationship of voting and education, education and employment, employment and housing, and the effect of all of these together upon how a minority achieves equality of opportunity and justice under the law. We needed more than census data because the census did not ask the right questions. We needed data that was beyond reproach given the emotional overtones of the total problem and the number of anxious Congressmen and Senators looking over our shoulders. Whatever one says about objectivity, there has not been substantiated a single factual misstatement in any of our growing library of special studies and general reports.

However, even given the proper data, I do not believe that much would have come of it had we not been willing to assess it vigorously with all the

total wisdom and courage at our Commission's command. This meant more value judgments of a growing complexity from an economic, social, political, psychological, anthropological, cultural point of view. We had to announce these judgments in clear yet firm words, not editorializing on the one hand, nor hiding behind murky prose either, or tergiversating because we knew the President and the Congress might well not take kindly to our judgments. Indeed, they often did not, and a President's broadside was laid upon us for even suggesting the withholding of federal funds, which eventually became Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Someone might object at this point by saying that we Commissioners were not really social scientists, even though working in a germane field. Therefore, we did not have professional reputations to uphold by being completely non-normative. Before responding to this, may I recall a scholar named Gunnar Myrdahl who seemed to have lacked similar inhibitions and yet stands out with very few others like a giant among the pygmies for all previous work done in this field.

Even so, the objection is worthy of more than an ad hominem response.

Let me say quite bluntly that I believe all important social science problems are pregnant with values, for the simple reason that the objects of social science study, man, his culture, his institutions, his processes, are all something of value or not worth studying. What man is and what his institutions are can be something of more or less value. Understanding of man and his culture and his institutions can be very valuable or worthless if all is misunderstood. Solutions can be valuable if they follow deep understanding of the relevant facts, or without value if they look at irrelevant facts with blind judgment. The very statement of a social science problem represents something valuable or worthless. The process of investigating a social science problem represents something worthwhile or useless; and the conclusions resulting are something of value or not, depending on a whole series of real value judgments all along the line of research. To say then that the social scientist is not interested in values is, to me at least, nonsense. Without values there is no science, no discernment, no judgment, no relevance, and certainly no meaningful relationship between social science and the age of social revolution in which we live. Also, without values,

there are no institutions, since all institutions represent organization to do something worthwhile, like schools for education or this Institute for its important purposes.

Maybe the easiest short-cut to an answer is to focus on the question: Social revolution for what? -- as Robert Lynd did many years ago in his book, Knowledge For What? I know of no more substantive answer to this question than to consider, at more length than is possible here, the fundamental dignity of the human person. While this involves philosophical and theological considerations outside the realm of social science itself, I know of no valid reason why the social scientist cannot also be a philosopher or a theologian, or both, if this exercise will enrich his primary intellectual endeavor in social science, particularly as regards its most central and complex focus: the human person.

Listen for a moment to what one lay philosopher-theologian has to say about that most indefinable of oft-defined realities, the human person. I am quoting from Jacques Maritain's "Principes d'une politique humaniste" (pp. 13-42):

"What do we mean precisely when we speak of the human person: When we say that a man is a person, we do not mean merely that he is an individual,

in the sense that an atom, a blade of grass, a fly or an elephant is an individual. Man is an individual who holds himself in hand by intelligence and will. He does not exist only in a physical manner. He has a spiritual super-existence through knowledge and love; he is, in a way, a universe in himself, a microcosm, in which the great universe in its entirety can be encompassed through knowledge; and through love, he can give himself completely to beings who are to him, as it were, other selves, a relation for which no equivalent can be found in the physical world. The human person possesses these characteristics because in the last analysis man, this flesh and these perishable bones which are animated and activated by a divine fire, exists 'from the womb to the grave' by virtue of the very existence of his soul, which dominates time and death. Spirit is the root of personality. The notion of personality thus involves that of totality and independence; no matter how poor and crushed he may be, a person, as such, is a whole and subsists in an independent manner. To say that man is a person is to say that in the depths of his being he is more a whole than a part, and more independent than servile. It is to say that he is a minute fragment of matter that is at the same time a universe, a beggar who communicates with absolute

being, mortal flesh whose value is eternal, a bit of straw into which heaven enters. It is this metaphysical mystery that religious thought points to when it says that the person is the image of God. The value of the person, his dignity and his rights belong to the order of things naturally sacred which bear the imprint of the Father of being, and which have in Him the end of their movement."

If this means anything, it means that of all valuable things on earth, man is most valuable because he is an end, not a means. The revolution today is for him, that his dignity might at long last be realized on earth, as well as in heaven, that no matter what his race, his color, his country, his culture, or his religion or the lack of it, he is a res sacra, a sacred thing, a person who deserves better of this world if his inner dignity is not to be lost in the outer indignity of so much that is utterly inhuman in modern life. This is what the social revolution is all about. It is a revolution for human equality, for human development, for an end to the poverty, the hunger, the illness, the ignorance, the homelessness, the utter hopelessness that afflict so many human persons today. I assume we agree that all of this is worthwhile, of value, because the human person is of all earthly realities the most valuable. And I

continue to assume that if social science is to be relevant to this age of social revolution it must become more and more involved in what the social revolution is all about.

I would like to conclude with a series of propositions that round out my basic theme. While these points are strongly normative, I do not intend that they be doctrinaire, or indicate any more one man's opinion as to what is central to the vitality and development of the social sciences in our day. You may, if you wish, say that like most free advice, these six points are worth what they cost.

1. The dignity of every individual human person is of the highest importance to all of the social sciences. This reality is most important in the choice and relevance of social science studies, and provides a framework within which the scientific study proper to the social sciences does not degenerate into a scientism only proper to the physical and natural sciences. The mathematical and statistical are often thwarted by the human freedom which is the glory and the risk of the human person. Mathematical methods are a legitimate means to reach an end, if molecules and men are not confused. The

average may indicate something about Stratford-on-Avon and completely miss Shakespeare in the process. Moreover, the purposes of the social sciences are not merely detached scientific exercises, but representative of the hopes, the achievements, and alas also the aberrations of the human person at its best and worst. In this, the social sciences are more akin to the novel and drama than to computer and laboratory technologies for the totality of the social sciences are attempting to understand, chapter and verse, on visible evidence, the most complex, sacred, and perverse of all realities, the human person and the ambiguities of human life, human culture, human institutions, and processes.

2. Social scientists today should show concern, even compassion, for the subjects they study. I have indicated above that the dispassion of most social scientists for many years in the face of the Civil Rights problem did them no honor. Social scientists are forfeiting their highest privilege when they approach man in the same manner as a physicist studying the activity of high energy particles or a chemist investigating electron paramagnetic resonance. Even in the achievement of great power, Einstein worked mightily for peace, and after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Oppenheimer said that the scientist now knew sin.

The hypotheses of the social scientist should be relevant to the real, critical, and urgent human problems of our day. His experimentation is the more difficult because human problems are more complex than physical, chemical, or biological problems, but nonetheless, the reasonable and rigorous testing of social science hypotheses is no less enlightening and much more important. Man lives and grows daily on moral rather than mathematical certitudes.

3. The social sciences are central to the age of social revolution which gave them birth and a great field for development. A suitable response to this challenge would be a real contribution of the social sciences to the purposes of these new revolutionary movements towards a greater human equality and a greater human development in our day. Building economic models may be great mathematical fun, but rather useless if they are completely unrelated to the economic facts of life in the underdeveloped countries. Learning research is sterile if it is never related to the third of mankind that is illiterate, either actually or functionally. Interpersonal relations studies are fine, but better if applied to the second revolution in Civil Rights, the formation of individual as compared to national conscience in the matter, or family disintegration, or administrative-faculty-student tensions, or the exciting

new ecumenical perspectives for understanding between religions and cultures, or the ever-latent tensions of cold war realities.

4. The social scientist may still be detached and reserved regarding the normative or value content of his studies, but as a human person, in touch with other fields of knowledge that supplement and buttress his studies, he cannot forever sit on the fence. What I am saying, hopefully, loudly, and clearly, is that concern on the part of the social scientist as a person should in some measure be followed by commitment. David Riesman is not afraid to come out foursquare for the Peace Corps as an antidote to the fat-headedness of our times. He says it more elegantly, but there it is. De Tocqueville has had more influence than most valueless, judgment-free political scientists; and Michael Harrington has had an influence denied to those who are factually perfect, but sterile in values and judgments based on values. The social scientist is an informed member of the human race. He should be heard on the contraverted issues of our times. He has much to add to the dialogue that would be a powerful corrective to the voice of prejudice, ignorance, and myth. He should be an active member of the club in the formulation of public policy. He should have his considered convictions and clearly express them in understandable language. Otherwise, he will be reduced to a self-conscious

conversation, with all the appropriate jargon, addressed only to other social scientists and lost to the public discussions that guide our policy and our culture, not to mention our prevalent values that will be the poorer for his non-participation.

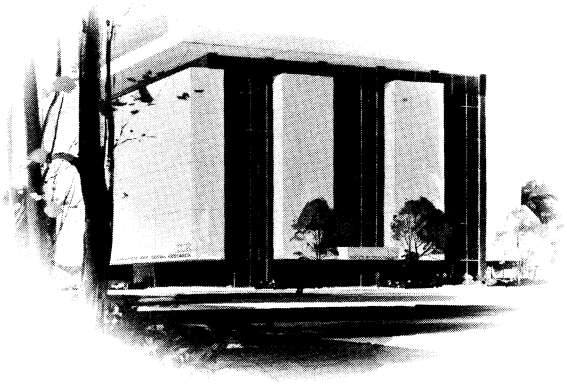
5. Much the same as the physical scientists and technologists of our age, the social scientist must resist the seduction of the grants and subsidies available to him. He alone should decide the direction and orientation of his own research. Here is the great value of social science in the university context. It may still say yes or no, and be the captain of its own destiny. Prostitution is an ancient art and the oldest profession. The social scientist is not immune to its call unless he adds integrity and conviction to his special art and to his high challenge in our times. Freedom of ideas, freedom of research and study - these are still the highest and most productive calls.

6. As a paradigm of the above, I refer you to Barbara Ward's latest works on economic development. She says clearly and with style that which her best social science judgment recommends. She casts it upon the open market for discussion. She has no illusions of infallibility and does not indulge in

nationalistic or selfish concerns. She just says what seems to make sense, in view of the evidence, and it does. If someone knows better, or has better evidence, he is free to gainsay her. But just in speaking this way, she makes a great contribution and sets an example that I trust may be personally more convincing than my words.

Thus, leaning on a lady, Lady Jackson to be specific, I come to an end. Had time permitted, I would have voiced a hope that you might give yourselves with intelligence and wisdom to the great demographic problem of our time, but you know far better than I how urgent this is, how much it needs deep scholarly attention and research, free equally of idealogy and preconception, open to all the possibilities that human understanding and great wisdom can provide.

May I end by committing to your care, with all the scholarly resources available to you, the task of promoting in our times the full depths and heights of human dignity -- that which we cherish for ourselves and may make possible increasingly for others less fortunate. God bless your efforts, and the work of this Institute.



INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

DEDICATION CONFERENCE
BANQUET

Wednesday, March 30, 1966, 7:00 P.M.

The Michigan Union Ballroom

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INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

Technology does not make a civilization, it only supports one. The relationships between individuals and groups in any time period, determine how technology is used and whether the society will prosper or perish.

In its investigations of social relationships the Institute for Social Research seeks to understand and to disseminate knowledge about our civilization and the forces within it which can be structured to promote its growth and progress.

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At this Dedication Banquet, this evening, the Institute for Social Research and its staff wish to thank the guests and the institutions they represent for their support,cooperation and interest in the work of the Institute.

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Acknowledgements	Rensis Likert Director Institute for Social Research The University of Michigan
"Social Sciences in an Age of Social Revolution"	The Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh President Notre Dame University