

HARD TIMES

JAMES RIDGEWAY

The new brain drain

IN recent years psychiatrists have taken a new interest in brain surgery as a means of controlling the behavior of individuals they consider to be disturbed. Dr. Peter Breggin, a Washington psychiatrist recently made a study of this phenomena.

In lobotomy and psychosurgery parts of the brain are cut out or mutilated in order to control behavior, usually aggressive, or to blunt emotion, anxiety or tension. At first lobotomies were directed at patients in state mental hospitals who suffered from chronic disabilities. But now such operations are being carried out on people who function relatively well, living at home and on the job.

Most of the patients are women, with old people and children in the other major groups. Brain surgery is widely used in Japan, Thailand and India. Now the focus is shifting to the US, in particular to the state of Mississippi where doctors are operating on hyperactive children as young as five years old. It's hard to say how many cases there have been, but Breggin counted 1,000 cases himself since 1965. Of that number, three doctors did 500 operations. Breggin believes there is a major promotional campaign underway to increase the practice, with promotional articles in newsmagazines and medical journals. There's even a new professional booster organization called the International Association for Psychosurgery.

Breggin goes on to recount examples from the literature attesting to the value of brain surgery. The Indian surgeon Balasubramaniam, in *International Surgery*, tells of his success with 115 patients, three of them under five, and another 36 under 11. He injects the child's brain with foreign matter such as olive oil, and reports, "The improvement that occurs has been remarkable. In one case a patient had been assaulting his colleagues and the ward doctor; after the operation he became a helpful addition to the ward staff and looked after other patients. In one case the patient became quiet, bashful and was a model of good behavior."

In Thailand surgeons cut out parts of the brain to alleviate cases where the sense of smell may be interpreted as leading to the disease. One patient was nine year old boy who thought he had an olfactory hallucination. But as Breggin notes, he more probably had a behavioral problem with his parents. This patient had a habit of running away from home, allegedly to smell engine oil in cars. The parents disciplined him but the boy still ran off. So an eminent surgeon cut out part of his brain, and the boy didn't run away to smell engine oil any more.

The Japanese operate on children from five to 13 "characterised by unsteadiness, hyperactive behavior disorder and poor concentration," among other things. Japanese surgeons report on their best results in five cases: "They have reached the degree of satisfactory obedience and of constant steady mood, which enabled the children to stay in their social environment, such as kindergarten or school for the feeble-minded."

The Germans operate with enthusiasm on the brain, and as an unexpected beneficial side effect they find that brain operations produce severe amnesia, lasting six weeks or so. This has definite therapeutic effects, according to the Germans. The Germans also help people get over their sexual fantasies with brain operations, and find that homosexual impulses disappear after brain surgery.

In Australia, Britain and Canada the techniques of brain surgery are well-developed. As elsewhere the main target group is women.

In our own country, the University of Texas Medical Center at Galveston operates on drug addicts and alcoholics. Doctors at Boston City Hospital reported a successful brain surgery on a depressed woman, but unfortunately the result was spoiled when the woman killed herself. In the state of Mississippi operations are carried out on children with the goal: to "reduce the hyperactivity to levels manageable by parents."

Breggin gives this picture of a Boston woman's struggle with her mad physicians: "A woman with a long and difficult psychiatric his-

tory brought in for psychosurgery, specifically a thalamotomy, mutilation of an emotion-regulating portion of the brain. Her mother is heavily involved with her and with the psychiatrist and surgeon, and is probably a significant force in getting her to submit to surgery. The patient gets obviously worse after the first mutilation is performed so she is done again with the convenience of her implanted electrode. But after the second mutilation she becomes enraged at her psychiatrist and her neurosurgeon, and refuses to talk with or deal with her neurosurgeon any more. Nor will she ever submit to a suggested third operation. Her electrodes are

therefore removed, but her rage is dismissed as "aparanoid" by V.H. Mark and his associates.

"Her mood then improves, as we are told, until she reaches a state of 'high spirits.' She is allowed out of the hospital to shop whereupon she goes directly to a phone booth, calls her mother to say 'goodbye' and takes poison and kills herself.

"Her suicide is not seen as a vengeful act of a mutilated soul against her mother and her physicians. Instead her suicide is interpreted as a sign that she was getting over her depression, a 'gratifying' result of the operation..."

We've reached the end of the road

JOHN KRAMER

THE heart of the nation's transportation crisis lies in the gross imbalance of the present non-system. While this country has constructed the world's most extensive highway system - extending road mileage by 192,000 over the last decade to a total of approximately 3.73 million miles - it has allowed its mass and inter-urban transit facilities to fall into such a state of disrepair that our urban dwellers have, if anything, less mobility than they did before the highway construction boom began. As a result, we, as a nation, face the twin and related problems of congested and polluted streets, and deteriorating and deficient public transportation.

Even if we were to begin today to rectify the imbalance that has developed since the end of the Second World War, it would take at least two decades to recoup the losses we have already sustained. Yet we continue to allow the situation to worsen year after year. Since 1963 more than 100 transit systems have withered and died. Last year mass transit suffered a collective deficit of \$332 million. The backlog of grant applications filed with the Federal Urban Mass Transit Administration has grown to \$2.6 billion dollars. Yet government outlays for transportation continue to be overwhelmingly in the highway field. According to the Urban Coalition's

Counterbudget, federal spending for transportation last year broke down as follows:

Mode	Amount	Percentage of total
Highways	\$4.88 billion	62.9%
Aviation	1.62 billion	20.9%
Water	1.00 billion	12.8%
Mass Transit	215 million	2.8%
Inter-city Rail	48 million	.6%
Total	\$7.763 billion	100.0%

The distorted transportation priorities which the figures above represent are not only unfair - they are also self-destructive. Apart from the millions of Americans who still rely on public transportation to get to and from work, the present system does not even serve the real needs of the automobile commuter. Year after year, billions of man-hours are needlessly lost in countless nerve-wracking traffic jams while motorists imbibe large quantities of carbon monoxide. Among the other social and environmental "costs" of the present automobile-highway complex, the following rank prominently:

1) We have created a society which is wholly dependent on the automobile. The present transportation planning process has enmeshed us in a vicious cycle: we build more roads because more people are buying cars; then more cars are built and sold because the roads are there and other

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ways of getting around on the ground are not; then more roads are built, etc.

Yet more than twenty percent of all American families do not own an automobile. In cities the percentage of people without cars is much higher. In addition, there are vast numbers of Americans who cannot or should not be forced to drive - including the handicapped, many of the 20 million Americans over 65 years of age, the 65 million under 16 years of age, and the more than ten million wage-earning heads of households who have incomes of less than \$4,000 per year.

2) Highways have contributed significantly to urban sprawl. Although highway planners have often justified urban freeways on the grounds that they will provide indispensable corridors for the movement of goods and people to new businesses in the downtown area, these same corridors have also created a way for the middle class to flee to the white suburban havens. In the inner city, these same concrete ribbons have functioned as ghetto walls for urban minorities too poor to take advantage of them and too politically impotent to prevent their communities from being ripped apart, their land from being devalued, and their employers from leaving town.

Moreover highways and the various other appendages of the automobile (including parking lots, driveways, gas stations, automobile dealerships, etc.) require far too much scarce urban land. More than 60 percent of the total land area of most large American cities is devoted to the movement and storage of the automobile. In addition to making our urban areas considerably uglier and noisier, highways greatly diminish our cities' all-important property tax base, not to mention the more than \$1.735 billion that the nation's cities had to pay out of their hard-pressed general revenues for such things as road maintenance and street construction.

3) The highway-automobile system is directly responsible for at least 39 percent of the nation's air pollution and up to 80 percent of the air pollution in some of our major cities, such as Washington and Atlanta.

The Environmental Protection Agency reported that nearly two-thirds of the carbon monoxide, more than one-half of the hydrocarbons, and some two-fifths of the nitrogen oxides released into the air are directly attributable to the automobile.

Moreover, because of the used car problem, it is estimated that the nation will not solve the automobile-related air pollution problem until 1990 even if the stringent auto emissions standards of the 1970 Clean Air Act are met by 1976.

4) The automobile highway system contributes significantly to the nation's increasingly serious energy crisis. It is estimated by the National Petroleum Council that domestic demand for petroleum will rise from 14.7 million barrels/day in 1970 to 24 million barrels/day in 1980 - out of which 38 percent, or 9.12 million barrels/day will be for gasoline. Projected

domestic production, including shale oil and two million barrels per day from Alaska, is only 12 million barrels/day - roughly half the projected demand.

It must be admitted that the automobile does provide a unique and desirable freedom on lengthy leisurely trips. Ninety percent of all Americans visited national parks last year, and more than 95 percent of them arrived in automobiles. Even for short-haul pleasure trips, automobiles will remain the chief means of transportation for millions of residents of the countryside, isolated towns, and small cities. The Saturday drive to market, the Sunday afternoon tour of the rural neighborhood - though infinitely rarer than in the early days of automobiling - continue as happy rituals for thousands of families.

But America has become an urban society. Automobiles and highways have been and continue to be a disaster for the nation's great urban centers. Highways are simply not the answer to moving large numbers of people either to a small number of destination points or within a small area. Better public transportation may be. The American Transit Association gives mobility figures in passengers per hour for various means of transportation:

Autos on surface streets	1,575
Autos on elevated highways	2,625
Buses on surface streets	9,000
Streetcars on surface streets	13,000
Streetcars in subways	20,000
Local subway trains	40,000
Express subway trains	60,000

Time is rapidly running out for the nation's cities. The time for a radical re-ordering of the nation's transportation priorities is already upon us.

At long last, however, an increasing number of Americans are becoming aware of the need for change. A recent nation-wide public opinion survey conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation for the Highway Users' Federation for Safety and Mobility (a major element of the highway lobby) indicates that a convincing majority of Americans favor limiting the use of private automobiles in urban centers. Among the survey's more important results were the following:

-- Of the rural and urban people interviewed fifty-seven percent said they "think it would be a good idea" to limit the use of automobiles in downtown areas of cities. Of people living in cities with one million or more in population, sixty-six percent favored the idea. And of interview subjects with higher-than-high school educations, sixty-five percent favored restricting car use in cities.

-- When asked whether they would favor restricting downtown auto use "in your own car," sixty percent of the urbanites answered affirmatively, as did sixty-four percent of those with greater-than-high school educations, whether urban or rural.

Citizen opposition to unnecessary, ill-conceived or illegal highway construction is mounting. People of all ages, of all races and socio-economic groupings, of varying political

persuasions and all parts of the country are beginning to come together on this issue. Nearly 200 proposed highway projects are presently subject to serious challenge by citizen groups. And these groups and individuals are winning more and more of their challenges in the courts and in referenda.

Both the National Governors' Conference and the U.S. Conference of Mayors have put themselves on record as favoring a drastic re-ordering of the nation's transportation priorities including the incorporation of the present Federal Highway Trust Fund into a central Transportation Trust Fund. A growing number of newspapers and magazines have similarly expressed editorial support for change.

There has been some movement for limited change in traditionally pro-highway circles. The Advisory Board of the American Road Builders Association recommended that ARBA's directors adopt a policy supporting a unified trust fund. Although the ARBA board rejected the recommendation at their October 22, 1971 meeting, and ARBA spokesman was quoted by the National Journal as saying, "We are moving in that direction."

The biggest changes, however, seem to be coming from the oil industry. The Mobil Oil Corporation took out an advertisement in the New York Times which, among other things, said:

But the highway construction boom has been accompanied by a mass transit bust. Train and bus travel in the country, with few exceptions, is decrepit. The air travelers suffer increasing indignities despite bigger, faster planes... Providing for our future transportation needs will require very large expenditures. We believe there's an urgent need for legislators to re-examine the procedures used to generate and expand transportation revenues. Such a review may yield the conclusion that special earmarked funds are no longer the best approach.

Mobil was one of the major contributors to the effort to defeat Proposition 18, a California referendum held in November 1970, which would have permitted some gasoline tax revenues to be used for public transit and smog abatement. In a more dramatic move, Gulf Oil Corporation, also a major contributor to the "No on Proposition 18" campaign, announced its support of a proposed amendment to the Massachusetts state constitution which would permit the use of the state's gasoline tax dollars for mass transit.

While all of these developments give some reason for encouragement, the struggle for a balanced transportation system - i.e., for a radical re-ordering of the nation's transportation priorities - will prove to be long and arduous. The present system has been with us too long and has become too basic a component in the American way of life for it to be otherwise. Directly and indirectly, the highway-automobile complex provides jobs for one in every five employed persons. And many of the industry and labor groups concerned have come together to form one of the most potent lobbying organizations ever known. They obviously constitute a very powerful political force in favor of the present system.

- From CONCRETE OPPOSITION, newsletter of the Highway Action Coalition

THE PHILOSOPHY OF F. C. TURNER

The following are taken from a speech by Federal Highway Administrator F. C. Turner given before the American Transit Association on September 23:

"For example, there is an argument often heard that we must provide mass transit facilities in our cities in order to move the aged, the young, the handicapped, and the poor. This conclusion seems to me to be a pretty flimsy justification for such a system if this is our only reason for it. The elderly can't get on and off of fast scheduled buses or trains, or fight their way in the crowds that surround such a facility; nor can they trudge up or down stairs and long waiting platforms or walk several blocks to the bus line. Even if they did or could, such transit as we generally know it in most cities seldom would carry them to the places where they want to go. And so they depend in most cases on their children or friends to personally take them by auto to their destinations. And the same thing occurs with the handicapped. Those too young to drive are driven by their parents-or have access to their own private mass transportation system for most of their needs, paid for with public tax money-the school bus system, which numbers several times as many vehicles as public transit has. For the poor, it would be cheaper to issue them a car, or give them taxi coupons, like food stamps than to provide an expensive system for them alone."



"ANOTHER SECRET MISSION, HENRY?"

SOME of the people who were at Attica last September are in bad trouble.

The state's attack didn't end when the troopers came blazing in, although most of the media coverage did. After the body count was over, the state just shifted gears.

A grand jury in Wyoming County, N.Y., is now going through a preliminary investigation of the rebellion. Over half the grand jurors have relatives among the guards at Attica. They are expected to produce first-degree murder and kidnapping indictments against as many as 100 people. The victims will be those who were most active and most visible during the rebellion.

Under New York law, those who are indicted will be facing capital charges. The death penalty has been abolished in New York - for everything except killing or kidnapping "uniformed service people" (such as policemen or prison guards).

Rockefeller has sent Dep. Atty. Gen. Robert Fisher to Wyoming Co. to supercede the local prosecutor on the Attica case. State prosecutors have been interviewing inmates without their lawyers and bribing them to talk with offers of parole. If sympathetic lawyers don't handle the defense, the prisoners will get court-appointed ones.

The Attica Defense Committee is planning a series of benefits in New York City to raise money for legal expenses and to publicize the issue. People who want to devote energy or money or both to the defense effort can contact the committee at the National Lawyers Guild, 1 Hudson Street, New York, N.Y. 10013. - UPS

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