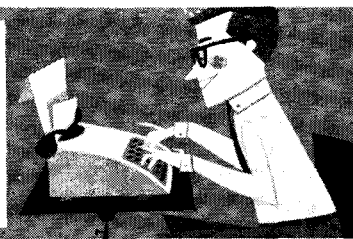


Top of My Head



A Cup of Coffee, a Muffin, and Me

WHERE ONCE the alarm with which pointers pointed was directed at creeping socialism, now the finger is being pointed at creeping inflation and creeping automation. This misbegotten daily double overtook me this past week in its most pernicious form.

They had been creeping up on me for some time. But the time they picked was early morning, when I emerge as an automaton to appear at my corner drugstore for my morning's cup of coffee and blueberry muffin. The tab which the counter boy laid before me read 30 cents. Practically overnight, while I was asleep, the night riders had stealthily raised the price for a cup of coffee and a blueberry muffin all the way from 25 cents to 30 cents.

Well, I couldn't wait to get to a phone to call President Johnson:

"Hello, is that you, Mr. President?"

"Who is this?"

"This is a citizen who wants to help you hold the line against inflation."

"Who?"

"I'm in a drugstore in mid-Manhattan and I always have a cup of coffee and a blueberry muffin. For years I've been paying 25 cents for a cup of coffee and a blueberry muffin. But this morning the check was 30 cents. I want to ask you, sir, is that within the guideposts you have been talking about?"

"Who did you say this is?"

"This is a citizen with a blueberry muffin. I know you told us not to buy anything with an inflated price—to ask ourselves if we really need it. But I like a blueberry muffin with my coffee. What I'm asking, sir, is for permission to keep having the blueberry muffin. Of course I want to do what's best for my country."

"That's a fine American spirit. What time is it now?"

"Eight-twenty, sir."

"Oh. Well thanks for calling, Mr. Muffin."

Thus encouraged I went back to my breakfast determined to have it out with the owner—the pharmacist—when I'd finished eating. To give up my blueberry muffin was unthinkable. Not that I'm hooked on blueberries. I don't like blueberries. If you're ever in a drugstore in mid-Manhattan and you see a man at the counter picking blueberries

out of a muffin and laying them aside on his plate, it's me. I would order a blueberry muffin without the blueberries but they don't make them that way. So I go through this revolting ritual of picking out the blueberries.

When the pharmacist had finished mixing his day's tuna-fish salad I asked him about the inflated price of the muffin. He explained the price had actually gone up on the coffee. Well, that presented another problem. Having a blueberry muffin with water wouldn't do because our Mayor Lindsay has asked us to conserve water.

Now, I guess you're asking: "Which is greater—your patriotism for your country, which today stands alone, beset by a host of unfriendly nations inviting us to go home, or this miserable junior breakfast of a cup of coffee and a blueberry muffin?"

And well you may ask that. You might also ask, "Why don't you have your coffee at home?" But that's another pitiful story. We have a lady working for us who has been there many, many years. And her coffee is nothing to uh—well, it's nothing. I'm not an expert on coffee. I can't tell the difference between a good cup of coffee and a bad cup of coffee, but I can tell the difference between bad and extra bad. You've heard of a heavenly cup of coffee? Well, put that into reverse. Her coffee is chock full of something. I don't know what.

MY story to her is that I don't eat breakfast. I take a long morning walk. If ever you call my place and she tells you I'm taking my constitutional, you will know I'm in the drugstore across the street picking blueberries out of a muffin at the inflated price of 30 cents.

I know full well the perils of inflation. It hit me at the barbershop so suddenly that I had seriously planned to become a Beatle. Or, at the very least, a violin virtuoso. But I am now hooked on coffee with a blueberry muffin, the staff of life.

However, all is not lost. My tip remains stable. I had thought of cutting it to approximately half. But I don't know. It looks cluttered—pennies spread over the counter. And with all those blueberries. Messy.

—GOODMAN ACE.

Et tu, Brut?



Bold new Brut for men. By Fabergé.

For after shave, after shower,
after anything! **Brut.**

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED—VI

Confessions of a Scientist-Humanist

A mathematician's insight into the significance of the all-encompassing unity that underlies diversity

By WARREN WEAVER

OBSERVATIONS, we have finally and painfully learned in science, depend upon the observer, and after each observation the observer is, perhaps by very little but nevertheless essentially, a different person. So I have to start by mentioning a few facts about my life.

My earliest curiosity was about how things are made and why they work. This led me by semantic error—my family and friends knowing the word “engineering” but being wholly vague about the word “science”—to my graduating from college with the degree of civil engineer. But it was during my sophomore year that the blazing beauty and power of differential and integral calculus were revealed by a great teacher, and I promptly knew that I wanted to move into mathematics and, eventually, into mathematical physics. So I went on to take a doctor's degree, and spent more than a dozen years teaching undergraduate mathematics to engineers, and the classical fields of mathematical physics to graduate students of physics.

Then came a reorienting. My friend and previous co-worker Max Mason had gone from the presidency of the University of Chicago to the Rockefeller Foundation, and he caused me to be invited to join that philanthropy as Director for the Natural Sciences. The phrase “natural sciences” there meant, in principle, “everything scientific except medicine”; however, it promptly began to mean, in operational terms, something different.

For, forced by the offer to think what a large philanthropic foundation ought to be doing, I rather suddenly realized that if such an agency were to have sig-

nificant influence upon the development of science it ought not simply climb on a surfboard riding down a great wave that had been building for a century, and which was sweeping forward with majestic power—it ought to scan the horizon and try to help build a wave of the future.

Research in the physical sciences was, in 1932 when I faced this decision, moving forward with great vigor. The discouraged and complacent prediction of 1900 that there was nothing left to do but slightly to improve the accuracy of physical measurements had been blasted by Einstein, Planck, Bohr, and the genius of the “boy physicists” of the Twenties. Relativity and quantum theory were leading to the beginnings of modern high-energy particle physics, and startling and beautiful new results were fairly bursting forth. The *Physical Review* changed from a thin monthly to a massively thick bi-monthly; and over the world dozens of new journals appeared.

ALL this was wonderful, was amazing, and was lovely. But this wave needed no special encouragement. Interconnections with technology and with defense were assuring massive support from industry and government. The problem with that wave was not to build it up—the real problem, when one considered nuclear energy, was to determine whether this wave of unleashed physical power was becoming a tidal wave that might engulf us.

There was discernible, however, another wave—one ready to swell. For centuries other able scientists had been concerned not with physical but rather with living nature. Its incredible variety and complication was such that for long, early periods little was possible beyond

collection, description, and classification. Then observation became more penetrating, and scientists began to study the parts of living things, their actions and interactions, and the overall behavior of living organisms.

But variety and complication, and the lack of tools with which to deal with such variety and complication, limited progress. By 1932, however, when the problem of deciding on a new program in science faced the Rockefeller Foundation, one could see that the situation had essentially changed.

For the various physical sciences, notably chemistry and physics but also that non-physical and essentially mental science, mathematics, had by then produced a whole array of new instruments, of new techniques of analysis, and of new general theories that promised to have the dexterity, precision, generality, and power to deal with the complex problems of living matter. It therefore seemed clear to me that the Rockefeller Foundation ought to concentrate upon developing modern experimental biology, or, more broadly and accurately, ought to concentrate upon financing the friendly invasion of the biological sciences by the physical sciences.

IT seemed equally clear to me that I was no person to head such a program, since my training and experience had all been in the physical sciences. I was wholly fascinated by the physical sciences, and was very happy in the job I already had. But the officials of the Rockefeller Foundation persuaded me; and coming to this fork in the road, I chose the unexpected and strange turning.

As a result of this decision I spent twenty-eight years in the Rockefeller