

over the neighbor's fence to check on the condition of his affairs.

My responsibility as a twentieth-century American is not something I can frantically grab at. It is something I must prepare for. A girder of structural steel plays its role in the framework of a large building only if it has been properly poured, tempered, and secured. Therefore, my responsibility is to pour, temper, and secure myself as a component part of modern society. In my particular case, this can be enhanced by stimulating my intellectual capacities, by developing my spiritual depth and discipline, and by pursuing my life's work with imagination and dedication. The facilities for such a program are at my fingertips, as they are for most Americans. All I have to do is avail myself of them. By expanding these three dimensions of my life, I will increase the scope and quality of my personal web. Then the tangible means of pursuing social responsibility will fall within my province and I will be able to give them more than hollow "do-gooder" noises and nervous energy.

My responsibilities as a twentieth-century American are the same as those of an Early Egyptian or Late Empire Roman. Basically, this concept is fulfilled by being responsible for myself. Though I am but a pinch of flesh in the cosmos, a machine is only as strong as its weakest component part.

## A Legion of Morons

Judy Winslow

IN William Allen White's essay "Good Newspapers and Bad," he states that "the moron's name is Legion." By such a statement, Mr. White professes his belief in the idea that our society harbors many individuals who may be classified as morons. Mr. White does not mean morons in the strictest psychological sense of the word, however. He does not use the definition of a moron as being a person who is mentally deficient to the extent that his mental capacity can reach only that of a twelve-year-old child. Mr. White's reference to morons is one pertaining to those persons who have slightly less than average intelligence and who have failed to develop that intelligence to the point where they have a clear conception of right and wrong. These persons, according to Mr. White, are not the illiterate minority as one might expect, but they are the people who make up a large and prominent part of our society. One reason which Mr. White gives for the increasing prominence of this group is public and compulsory education.

I agree with Mr. White's statement, "The moron's name is Legion." The great number of these mentally and morally mediocre people is evident to anyone who cares to observe humanity. These people are often referred to as the mass or the mob. They are a closely knit society, a fact which accounts for their strength; for, if they are not strong in intellect, they make up for this deficiency in unity. In this moronic mass the "herd instinct" is the dominating

force. There are no individuals as such, and there is no individual thought or enterprise. Because of their great numbers and their unanimity of thought, these people are able to exert great pressure on the remaining parts of American society. Several more intelligent and less moral men, realizing the potential power of the moronic mass, seek to lead this group in order to procure their own selfish and often diabolic ends. The consequences of such actions of a few men lead to a regression of society in general and cause further retardation of the Legion.

Examples of the great size and power of the legion of morons are recognizable in many ways. The individual moron is relatively harmless. He is the person who retards, in some small way, the educational process of the schools across our country. He is the individual who writes "crank" letters and follows fire trucks and ambulances to satisfy his own morbid curiosity. It is he who is constantly stating biased and unfounded opinions which tend to confuse the thought processes of other more intelligent individuals. As one of many moronic persons grouped together, the moron is much more of a threat. Combined with a group of similar individuals, he can completely clog up the entire educational system. As a member of a group of several morons, he can foster widespread "hate" campaigns against certain races or religions. He can completely eradicate all advances made by intelligent individuals toward clearer, more concise thinking.

Those people who recognize the presence of such a legion of morons in our society and who pander to this group are even more of a threat to America than is the moronic group itself. These people are intelligent enough to recognize the herd waiting to be led to social slaughter. Newspapers often resort to such tactics when their editors become more interested in quantity of readers than in quality of copy. They emphasize the morbid and the sensational, which appeal to the legion of morons. They print highly opinionated articles and rely on headlines wrought with emotional words. The morons are led easily by such methods of journalism because of their inability and unwillingness to think rationally. The tabloids and the "bad" newspapers owe their tremendous success to such a group in our society. They do not care about the consequences which may result from such policies; their main goal is to make money. In this way "bad" newspapers can exert an amazing and frightening amount of influence. Because the few really outstanding newspapers in our country are read by a minority of the public and because this minority is made up of individuals rather than a mass, little is done to stem the overwhelming tide of misconceived ideas and misguided opinions formulated by the morons in our society. It is the latter group who could run rampant and unchecked, causing devastation of our country and of our society, if poor mediums of communication such as "bad" newspapers could ever completely gain control of this legion of morons.



"The moron's name is Legion." This is a fact which cannot be denied by the more intellectual part of our society; nor can the possibilities of this group be denied. But there is some hope for the improvement of this situation. Just as compulsory education has partially brought about this condition, it can also help to alleviate it. Perhaps it is too much to ask that the morons be changed by the schools into intellectually superior persons. However, those people with potentialities for leadership can be educated by the schools, and their potentialities can be channelled into beneficial activities. The more intelligent individuals can be taught to recognize the morons and their demagogic leaders. These malevolent leaders can be controlled and replaced by new and better men whose aim is to raise the level of the legion. Good leaders can raise the standards of the moronic mass. Without support from poor leaders and consequently from the mass, such harbingers of evil as "bad" newspapers can no longer exist. This solution is easy to state but difficult to enact; however, even an awareness of the problem is a step in the right direction. Although there will always be a legion, it need not be one of morons; instead, it can be a legion of average, thinking individuals working together to achieve mutual good.

## A Blue-sealed Envelope

Kermit Thomas

ALL he heard was the rustle of his own clothing as he walked purposefully down the dimly lit hall. He felt the dry forced-air heat hit him in the face when he passed each vent in the wall. This heat was the life-saver to the populace deep inside this forsaken, burnt out planet. Glancing now and then at door numbers, he suddenly realized what a distance he had walked in such a short time. The last door number was 1347. He had ascended eight levels in less than ten minutes. He was glad that the ascenders began here on the thirteenth level so that he could ride the rest of the way.

He reached the end of the hall and palmed the silver sphere by the door marked "A." Immediately, the door slid open and he stepped into the ascendor. As he sat down on the padded cushion of the seat, the door closed and four spheres appeared in front of him. Each was of a different color—silver for Communications, red for Transport, blue for Military, and gold for Government. He smiled as he calmly touched the gold sphere. The ascendor rose instantly and stopped before he could exhale the air he had inhaled thirty-eight levels below. The door beside him opened and he stepped into the very luxurious government level. He walked over to the level-directory and scanned the lettered board until he saw the title "Grand Marshal." Beside it was GOV 5100. He absorbed this information and began to walk slowly down the hall. His one worry was the blue of his Military Security uniform, which he