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It is this last -- the culturally creative, socially progressive and even radical Kansas -- which is so hard for us to believe in. It's easy enough to believe in the Kansas that created legends of painful righteousness and piety with her rigid blue laws, her fervent religious revivals and her hatchet-wielding Carry Nations determined to enforce bone-dry Prohibition. Vestiges of this Kansas yet remain, obvious to every eye. But almost invisible, unless one probes beneath an almost impervious surface, are vestiges of the Kansas that pioneered in women's suffrage, railroad regulation, "blue sky" laws, and banking regulation; that was known for the strong and colorful public figures she produced; and whose journalists (led by White and the acid Ed Howe in his Atchison Globe) was nationally famous for its force, pungent wit and general intelligence.

Certainly the Kansas I've personally known has not been distinctive for its intellectual leadership and political progressivism. On the contrary, a smug conservatism has generally prevailed in our ruling circles. Ours has become a solidly one-party (Republican) state with a one-party (Republican) press whose Republicanism has generally been well over in the right wing of the national party. The typical Kansas politician has long ceased to be a brave, colorful fellow who coins vivid phrases, makes symbolic gestures around which social movements can cohere and so exercises personal leadership.

In most of the key areas of the Kansas I've known the economic man has become dominant almost to the point of excluding values and interests that differ from his. There is a tacit assumption among our ruling elite that the proper major aim of all education, scientific research and cultural activity is the increase of private profits. Education is defined as vocational and professional training; scientific research is the development of new, more profitable products and processes; cultural activities are good in so far as they bring new business to the community; and intercollegiate sports are very good because they do bring business, also providing entertainment for business men. Relatively ineffective (even though they speak the mind of a substantial majority of the total population, in my opinion) are the voices which proclaim all this to be an inversion of the natural order, subordinating means to ends.

As I write this in my house on a hill, I look out upon the Kansas State College plant. The two structures that bulk largest in my possibly symbolic vision are the football stadium and a new \$2,500,000 field house which can seat 13,000 people at a basketball game. Invisible to me is the auditorium -- where lectures, plays and music are presented -- but I know it to be a 40-year-old rattletrap which was abominably planned in the first place, has acoustics bad beyond belief and whose seats were obviously designed to contradict every normal posture of the human body. No effective pressure for a new college auditorium has yet manifested itself. A municipal auditorium is now under construction here, after some years of controversy as to whether the floor should be of the sloping type suitable for cultural events or the flat arena type suitable for sports events. Our business men wanted the latter; they're getting it.