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Saving Us From Ourselves: The Interaction of Law and Technology: Extemporaneous Comment

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EXTEMPORANEOUS COMMENT

BY WILBERT E. MOORE

I HAVE four or five unrelated joints, all of them brief. I was provoked by Dr. Curlin's paper into thinking once more about the poor job the social sciences do training people in the techniques of social invention. Except for law, and perhaps social work, we do not have technological adjuncts to the social sciences. We trust social invention, therefore, to legislators and other amateurs. What brought this to mind was his wish for an organization creature which does not exist. With regard to the creation of such an organization, I find myself in agreement with Dr. Coates—we have to try several. We do not have enough theory or experience to permit us to create the ideal assessment organization.

I agree with Professor Bereano that we have discussed our problems in elitist terms, but I would submit that it is both justifiable and proper. This is because "elitist problems" are closely related to a middle class bias. Class has been thought to be one of the more useful concepts used by sociology. I would say that by most standard measures, or criteria of class membership, the United States is 85 percent or at least 80 percent middle class. This leads me to the conclusion that there is no such thing as the culture of poverty. The poor, as Dr. Bereano noted, share our middle class values and, they develop mechanisms to help them cope with and endure their poverty while they aspire to middle class status. Thus, to say we have a middle class bias, seems to admit that we are talking about the majority of the American population and, the problem becomes one of getting everybody into the game.

Finally, one other comment that I wanted to make is that we *do* have a vehicle of communication between those lawyers and social scientists who want it, and that is *Law and Society Review*. I would also suggest a *Law and Technology Review*, which would, again, not try to reach every lawyer or every technologist, but only those who want to cross the bridge or stand in the middle of it. It seems to me that there is room for such a journal.