

# EDITORIAL

THE USE of LSD and other psychedelics is increasing among a variety of people, mostly laymen. Sidney Cohen estimates that about 40 doctors use it and about 40,000 laymen. Newspaper writers sensationalize the "teen-age drug scene" and give lurid reports of LSD "parties." However, the best available data indicate that teen-agers are not a major group of LSD-users. Rebelliousness may be one motive for involvement with psychedelics but it does not seem to be the major one. As the well-known sociologist Howard Becker points out in a recent article in *The Nation* (100th Anniversary Issue) on "Deviance and Deviates,"—"the LSD movement differs from other organizations . . . in being composed of people who were not, prior to their involvement with LSD, deviant in any sense. . . . They exemplify the increasing militancy, organization and self-consciousness of deviant worlds and their growing unwillingness to let respectable society have its own way with them unchallenged." In Charlotte, N. C., a newspaper published an extensive series of articles about a group of businessmen and professionals who meet regularly to have psychedelic sessions and make no secret of it. In other words, we may speak of a *white-collar black market*, composed of groups of serious men and women, who have in general made satisfactory "adjustments" to society, but sense that something has been left out. The two main goals pursued by these psychedelic "cells" are (1) self-development in the sense of greater awareness, consciousness expansion; and (2) improved marital relations. The latter is an extremely important potential application, in view of the growing body of evidence that LSD and other psychedelics are extraordinarily potent aphrodisiacs (actually heightening all forms of sensory awareness, including the sexual), when taken in the appropriate set and setting. In ill-prepared subjects who are given LSD in "cold" surroundings the release of sexual energies will of course only cause confusion, fear and paranoia.

Some of the many varied applications of psychedelics which are interesting professional people are illustrated by the articles in this issue: Hoffer and Osmond, two pioneers in psychiatric research with LSD, advocate its widespread use in psychiatric training; Gerald Oster, a professor of chemistry, reports on its use in

studying the structure and functioning of the retina; John Blofeld finds mescaline confirming the teachings of Vajrayana Buddhism; Timothy Leary reports on a new device to record empirically the flow of consciousness in LSD and ESP research.

Meanwhile, Senator Thomas J. Dodd, in a statement regarding consideration of the Drug Abuse Control Amendments of 1965 before the United States Senate, refers to "pseudo-intellectuals who advocate the use of drugs in the search for some imaginary freedoms of the mind and in the search for higher psychic experiences." The outcome of the federal lawmakers' deliberations is quoted below, along with another set of restrictions imposed by the State of New York.

Thus the creative tension increases between those who wish to realize the potentials of their nervous systems more fully and those who regard such activities as dangerous. The American system, for all its faults, is an admirable field for this kind of constructive conflict since, as Howard Becker points out: "Our institutions can, when they are spurred into action by determined men, protect minorities of whatever kind from the restraints of cultural tradition and local prejudice."

R.M.

## **TWO NEW LAWS RELATING TO PSYCHEDELICS**

### **I. FEDERAL LAW**

President Johnson signed into law on July 15, 1965, a bill known as the "Drug Abuse Control Amendments of 1965," originally sponsored by Senator Thomas J. Dodd. This law is effective from February 1, 1966. Relevant sections are quoted verbatim from the law below:

#### **FINDINGS AND DECLARATION**

SEC. 2. The Congress hereby finds and declares that there is a widespread illicit traffic in depressant and stimulant drugs moving in or otherwise affecting interstate commerce; that the use of such drugs, when not under the supervision of a licensed practitioner, often endangers safety on the highways (without distinction of interstate and intrastate traffic thereon) and otherwise has become a threat to the public health and safety, making additional regulation of such drugs necessary regardless of the intrastate or interstate origin of such drugs; that in order to make regulation and protection of interstate commerce in such drugs effective, regulation of intrastate commerce is also necessary because, among other things, such drugs, when held for illicit sale, often do not bear labeling showing their place of origin and because in the form in which they are so held or in which they are consumed a determination of their place of