

away privacy, whether it be from the individual, his home, the classified senatorial hearing, or the diplomatic conference. There is every reason to believe that defining "reality" in terms of persons and in personal terms will continue, especially as the new, depersonalized reality becomes too complex to convey much meaning to the average citizen. Personalities are meaningful, and defining reality in terms of personalities will continue both to appeal to the conventional wisdom and experience of most people and to provide an attitudinal environment wherein it is more permissible for business and Government to probe persons, too.

Up to the present, "central city" concentration (in contrast to most suburban situations) population growth, and increasing physical mobility have given the individual some relative opportunity to lose himself, or to be anonymous, thereby preserving to some extent his privacy and freedom of action. As we shall see, much of whatever ecological advantage these sources of anonymity provide probably will disappear even if, as is unlikely, the flight to the suburbs ceases.

We must realize, too, that the ways in which the applications of computer technology affect other important aspects of our social environment inevitably will reinforce or overcome attitudes about freedom and privacy. In particular, the computer will have an increasingly significant influence on the design and conduct of public policies. The states of mind and conditions for action resulting from the implementation of these policies will affect the ease with which one can pursue freedom and privacy. An obvious inhibiting influence upon that pursuit would be produced by the siege style of command and control of society which Harold Lasswell calls the "garrison state."<sup>3</sup> A garrison state might well be the consequence of an ever more elaborate proliferation of national security policies, guided and embellished by the kinds of computer-based war games, weapons systems, and sophisticated strategies which have become fashionable in the last several years. On the other hand, a federally integrated attack on crime, fully using the ability of the computer to organize and interpret data about criminals and crimes, eventually would free many terrorized people from threats of death or disaster and open business opportunities now preempted by the freewheeling criminal. Thus, it would not be surprising if, in the future, people were willing to exchange some freedom and privacy in one area for other social gains or for personal conveniences. Nor would it be the first time they have done so.

With such background considerations in mind, let us speculate on particular circumstances in which the computer will confront what, in myth or actuality, we take to be present privileges of privacy or freedom.

#### PRIVACY

Consider that kind of privacy which exists by virtue of the ability to restrict access to information about oneself and one's related activities and records. By and large, the information thus restricted concerns the historical self: not only one's outward conduct, but also his inward evolution as a human being.

The availability of computers can alter seriously the degree to which one can restrict such access. Several factors which have determined degrees of privacy in the past are—

(1) The ability of the privacy invader to bring together data which has been available, but which has been uncollected and uncollated;

(2) The ability of the privacy invader to record new data with the precision and variety required to gain new or deeper insight into the private person;

(3) The ability of the invader to keep track of a particular person in a large and highly mobile population;

(4) The ability of the invader to get access to already filed data about the private person; and

(5) The ability of the invader to detect and interpret potentially self-revealing private information within the data to which he has access.

What is the interplay of these factors and what is their significance for privacy in the light of the computer's capabilities? Much of one's privacy remains undisturbed because no one has had the ability to pull together available information—or because no one has been sufficiently interested to go to the trouble of doing so. To understand the private implications in available data might first require both locating and integrating much widely dispersed information.

<sup>3</sup> Lasswell, "National Security and Individual Freedom," 47-49 (1950).