



The Present Age: Progress and Anarchy in Modern America

Robert Nisbet

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The Present Age challenges readers to reexamine the role of the United States in the world since World War I. Nisbet criticizes Americans for isolationism at home, discusses the gutting of educational standards, the decay of education, the presence of government in all facets of life, the diminished connection to community, and the prominence of economic arrangements driving everyday life in America.

This work is deeply indebted to the analyses of Tocqueville and Bryce regarding the threats that bureaucracy, centralization, and creeping conformity pose to liberty and individual independence in the western world.

The Present Age relates a tragedy—the unprecedented militarization of American life in the decades after 1914, as the result of the necessary resistance to National Socialist and Communist totalitarianism that fed into and reinforced the profound tendencies toward centralization within modern society.

Robert Nisbet (1913–1996), former professor of sociology at Columbia University, is the author of *Sociology as an Art Form*; *The Social Philosophers*; *Prejudices: A Philosophical Dictionary*; *The Sociological Tradition*; *History of the Idea of Progress*; and *Twilight of Authority*, also published by Liberty Fund.

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