

I called my second Editorial in June 1976 in ISR *The American Bicentennial In Default.* I had heard during a recent visit to the States that the 200th Anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence in July 1776 was to be celebrated by 25000 contests, competitions, commemorations, ceremonies, convocations and commissionings, officially called "American Revolution Bicentennial". All these were listed in a *Master Register of Bicentennial Projects*. I was convinced that none of these activities would be remembered in one, let alone 10 or 100 years, and therefore I called it a 'grave default'.

I suggested that the foundation of a "New Institution" should take place, similar to the existing Smithsonian Institution. The new mandate should be: "The Use and Application of Existing Knowledge", as vague as the mandate of Smithson was in 1826 "The Increase and Diffusion of Knowledge among Men". [See Title 278] By now, in 2001, after only a quarter of a century, the Bicentennial has long been forgotten and there is still no New Institution.

Unquestionably, the most innovative and outstanding contribution to the second issue of ISR was Matthew Huxley's *Criteria for a Socially Sanctionable Drug*. Matthew is the son of Aldous Huxley and Maria Nys and at the time of his writing was Chief of the Standards Development Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health at Bethesda near Washington.

His professional work had brought him into close contact with the prevalent drug abuse epidemic in the States, and he considered it high time to urge the production of *Soma*, the socially sanctioned drug, which his father, Aldous Huxley, had so fully described in his classic book *Brave New World*, published in London in 1932. Matthew Huxley mentioned in his article a number of psychedelic pharmacologicals in existence, like LSD, but did not specify the chemical constitution of the new *Soma*. He did suggest, however, an anti-soma.

Matthew Huxley devoted his seven-page contribution to the full analysis of the novel social factors which would arise through the existence of *Soma*. He enumerated the safety criteria under the headings of purpose, person, place, provider and product. He considered the social problems and discussed in detail excessive and continuous use of *Soma*, duration of effect, the identification of *Soma*, the intake routes and methods, and the matching of *Soma* to special social conditions. He concluded by asking the pharmaceutical industry to provide three kinds of *Soma*, a socialiser, a metaphysic and a sensualiser, each having its built-in individual and social safeguards. Had Matthew Huxley's suggestions been followed, no other article of the over 1000 I published as Editor would have had a more beneficial effect on society. The best of The Scientific Temper. [See also *Drugs—Religion's Chemical Surrogates* Title 373]